

103m.

LETTERS UPON SACRED SUBJECTS,

BY A

Person lately deceased.

Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed,
do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God and the Father
by him. COL. iii. 17.



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LONDON:

Printed in the Year MDCCLVII.

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L E T T E R S

UPON

SACRED SUBJECTS



London:

Hurst in the Year MDCCVII.

P R E F A C E.

T is proper to inform the reader, that the person, who wrote the following letters, was a married woman, and has been dead for some time. She never supposed they would be made public, but put down the sentiments of her heart in the confidence of friendship. They were her first thoughts; for she never studied them, nor wrote any of them twice over, and has very seldom altered a word in them. This may excuse the inaccuracies which some persons of a refined taste may here find. Besides they are not recommended as patterns of polite epistolary correspondence. Their merit is of another kind. It consists neither in the fineness of the language, nor in the elegance of the

manner, but in the goodness of the sentiment; which few understand, and fewer admire.

If you ask, Why then do you print them, if they will not be generally well received? It was to oblige several friends of the deceased. When these letters fell into their hands, they found great profit and delight in the perusal of them, and they believed others might find the same, and therefore they requested the publication, and prevailed. Whether it was right, or not, every reader will judge for himself; but that he may not judge rash judgment, he should consider the motives upon which they acted. They first desired the publication, because they thought it would be for God's glory. In the letters taken together there is a general view of God's gracious promises, and of his faithfulness and truth in fulfilling them, whereby it appears that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. He has engaged in his word to do many things for his people in the present life, the experience of which very few expect or seek for, and

P R E F A C E.

and thereby they deprive themselves of the greatest comforts of the gospel: whereas they that have expected and sought for present salvation, have found that not one tittle has failed of all the good things which God their Saviour had promised: all are come to pass, and not one thing has failed thereof. The candid reader will find many excellent observations upon this particular running through these letters, tending to the honour of that God, who glories in keeping mercy for thousands, and in being faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

There was another reason, which had great weight with the friends of the deceased. They had found benefit from the perusal of these letters, and therefore they hoped that others who were in the same frame and temper of mind with themselves might be profited by the same means. Whoever reads them, and is no better for it, should not be offended with us for liking them, any more than he should be angry with grown men, because they have left off eating milk, and are now desirous of strong meat.

There was also a third reason. They had not met with any thing of this kind. They had never heard of an epistolary correspondence carried on by two persons upon a religious plan, in order to watch over one another's soul. If such a thing there be, it had not fallen in the course of their reading. The greatest part of these letters are of this religious kind of correspondence : they were written to persons who had desired the deceased to look narrowly into their lives and conversations, and to deal honestly with them, by instructing, reproving, and correcting them in love. The acquainting the serious part of mankind of such a thing it is hoped may have its use : for wherever it has lately been put in practice, it has been found extremely useful, as it might be expected from the divine command — *Exhort one another daily.*

After they were determined by these reasons to print the following papers, it was intended to have given a character of their author ; but this was laid aside, because the letters lay open the secret springs of her heart more clearly than any other words can do.

do. To them we refer the reader.. He will there find her true character better than we can draw it. And if the same spirit be in him, which was in the author, when she wrote these letters, he will not only read them with profit, but will also be in possession of the greatest happiness he can have on this side of the grave. Reader, may thy letters, and thy life, and thy death be like hers.

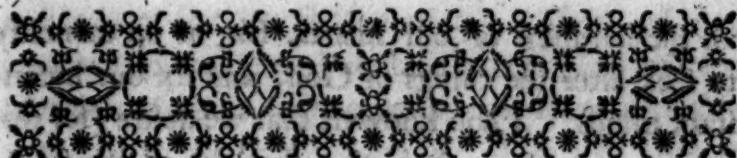


FREIGHT

go. To prove we let's read it over. Here it is.
The first part into characters from the
old and new English books. And we'll see
if any of them look like this. Well, I think
they do. Now, here's another one. This is
from a book of hours. It's written in
French, and it's written in Gothic script.
It's a very good example of Gothic script.
And it's written in French. So, if you
want to learn French, this is a good place
to start.



TELEGRAM



LETTERS

To Mrs. * * * *

OUR letter, my ever dear friend, has
been a great blessing to me; that you
should write in the style you now do,
filled me with such a sense of mine own
unworthiness, and of the goodness of God to me,
that it melted my stoney heart, and drew tears from
mine eyes. Oh would the God I adore enable me
to be of any help to you, how would my soul dilate
in thankfulness. Blessed Redeemer, draw us both,
and so will we run after thee. Oh Spirit of truth
descend on thine unworthy servants, and make us
fully sensible of the seal of our redemption! Con-
vince us still more deeply of our sins, and make us
still more fully to know, that they are washed away
by the blood of Jesus. Thou knowest the burdens
we labour under, the dissipations of our thoughts,
our wanderings in prayer, our spiritual sloth, and
all

all the hardness of our hearts, stir us up earnestly to seek after the things of God, and fix our inconstant minds. Thou knowest that we desire (for this desire comes from thee) that the love of the father may abide in our hearts. We beg thine assistance that we may eagerly seek after this love. Oh teach us the prayer of faith, and enable us constantly and undauntedly to press forward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling. Be thou our guide, be thou our comforter for ever and for ever. *Amen.*
Amen.

What a task have you laid upon me ? I watch over you ! I your guide ! This quite overcomes me. I cannot bear it. Oh, my love, there is no one so much wants a guide and a director as I do. Sure this letter of yours was particularly designed by providence to humble me ; but unworthy as I am, I will by the grace of God strive to do every thing you desire of me : but then you must return the same to me, and take me into the number of those you watch over. Let us go hand in hand in these paths which lead to everlasting life. What shall I say to quicken your steps ? It was said to me since I saw you, by Mr. *** “ I hope still “ to have a great deal more pleasure from you, by “ seeing you *press forward.*” Think these words were addressed to you by the same person. Oh what a blessing of God accompanies the words of one who is uniformly christian, of one who spends and

and is spent for the service of his master, of one who has no one view but the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Who would not strive earnestly to follow so bright an example? The very sight of such a person animates the soul in its warfare. Oh what soul, which is the least alive to God, would not even *agonise* to be perfectly renewed after the image of Christ! Is your heart, is my heart so dead, that this will not affect it? —— Alas, I grieve for mine own — may God give me to rejoice for yours.

I have time for no more. May the blessing and influence of the ever-adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be continually with your soul.

I am your ever-affectionate, &c.

My dear Friend,

I think you are now through divine grace, strong enough to bear what I am going to say to you, that I have long seen a mixture of pride and vanity even in the best of your performances; but I could hardly allow myself to believe it. What I have often said, shall I judge so of her, whom every body admires for her surprizing modesty and humility?

Is

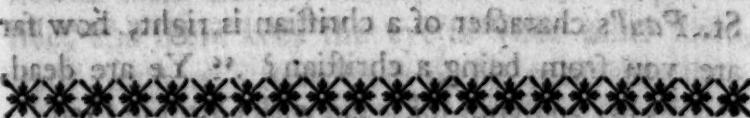
Is it not because she is more excellent than myself, and therefore I am seeking to find some fault in her? Then I have often prayed to God not to suffer my soul to be deceived by any sinister views, and to perfect in you what was wanting. And this I trust he will do for us both, if we keep the longing eye of our souls steadily fixed upon him. Oh for holiness of heart! Let us labour, my dear companion, for holiness, as a dying sinner labours for life.

I had yesterday a most delightful letter from Mr. ***. It sent me to my knees so convinced of my black ingratitude to my heavenly father, that I could neither find words nor thoughts sufficient to express my unworthiness; yet at the same time my heart was full of thanksgiving, under a sense of his unbounded mercies. O help me, my dear friend, to be more and more thankful! Such advantages — dearest Jesus, how justly great must be my condemnation, if I do not make suitable improvements. Take the latter part of Mr. *** letter, apply it to yourself constantly, every minute if possible.
 " You have need therefore to watch and pray always, and then especially when you might seem to have least need. You have reason therefore to fear always: for your enemies are always watching. But you have reason likewise to rejoice always, because he that keepeth you never sleeps."

My

My dear Friend, last night had

I Was heartily glad to see your letter: for I began to fear that I had been too plain with you. If you really can bear what I said in my last, our friendship is built on a firm foundation indeed, and Oh may it ever remain unshaken. You have told me nothing of the state of your own mind. You have not given me to praise God, by telling me that your heart is more dead to the world, and more alive to God, and that you are constantly watching unto prayer. All this I hope and expect to hear the next time you write to me. *Adieu.*



My dear Friend,

I Have read your letter with tears, and earnest prayers to God for you, and for myself. We are both unworthy creatures; indeed, my love we are, more unworthy than we can either express or conceive. Oh let us fly to the blood of sprinkling. There and there alone can we find help. Thanks be to God, that you have a clear view of your own heart. This is a most profitable prospect, though a most dreadful one. Think me not cruel,

cruel, when I wish that the Holy Spirit may *deeply* wound your soul with a sense of its corruptions. The deeper the conviction, the firmer the peace that follows.

I hardly know how to believe you, when you tell me you are hurried away by desires after worldly happiness. Is it possible? Alas, my friend, pardon the harshness of the expression, but if the love of the world is in your heart, you are only a *painted sepulchre*, beautiful indeed outwardly, but within — My dear creature, I cannot bear to think this — A christian be hurried away with desires and endeavours after worldly happiness! If St. Paul's character of a christian is right, how far are you from being a christian? “Ye are dead,” says he, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

May not these violent ragings of pride, vanity, &c. you speak of, be some of the last struggles of a dying enemy. When the strong man armed keepeth his house his goods are in peace, but when he that is stronger comes upon him to overcome him, and to take from him that armour in which he trusted, no wonder the house is in a tumult. And this I hope is your present case. But beware, my dear soul, of thinking, that you never shall be otherwise. Limit not the grace of God. He has only to say, *Peace, be still,* and immediately the winds and sea obey him. “But how to obtain
“ this

“ this peace ?” Oh my dear friend, will you follow the advice of the meanest and most unworthy of the servants of Christ. Look upon yourself as being only *now* fully convinced of your guilt and dreadful condition. Look upon yourself as a *poor, lost, helpless, miserable creature*. Set before your eyes your sins, with all their aggravations ; and when your soul is weighed down to the dust under a sense of your own vileness, then throw yourself at the foot of the cross : there lay as a loathsome leper before the almighty healer : there let your parched soul *gasp* (with the utmost stretch of all your faculties) after those life-giving streams which flowed from Christ’s hands, his feet, his pierced side, and there keep the eye of your mind fixed, until you have a fresh sense of his pardoning love, until the still small voice be heard in your soul — “ Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.”



I Was in hopes, my dear, that I had cause to think you had gained ground, but if I was mistaken am very sorry. God forbid however that you should have gone back: I must not for my own ease believe that. The reason for your not finding so much comfort as usual flowing from the cross, is because you lay yourself too much out upon

upon *outward* things. I doubt not but your own will is indeed very powerful, and it will ever be so, while you indulge yourself in castle-building. Let your schemes be ever so good, they are (unless God had given you the means and power to perform them) merely the creatures of your own will ; and I don't know any thing that self-will more delights in, than in these imaginary good projects. Believe me, my dear soul, I speak from experience. There is nothing more encourages self-will, pride, and every temper we ought to subdue, than these schemes. For God's sake strive so get the better of this folly. I know your temper is naturally inclined to it, and therefore you ought to be more particularly watchful. Cannot you, my love, keep your thoughts fixed on the present moment in a constant dependence on the leadings of the Spirit of God, and only wishing that every succeeding moment may bring a new accession of grace to your soul, without fixing on the particular means, by which you would have it come. When the will is in this total resignation to God, it brings a peace to the soul, which cannot be described.

I don't like your going to *Kaux-Hall*. I think you ought to try every possible means, except absolute disobedience to your parents, to get off. Suppose you were to be sincere, and own it was against your conscience. Pray God direct you what to do. If you are really forced to go, you are clear,

clear, and God will doubtless preserve your heart from the pollutions of the place. If this is the case, I think you will be in less danger of being hurt there, than in your visit to Mrs. *** : for in this visit you will lay exposed to the worst enemy you have, that is, *yourself*. With those good people, whom you love and admire, and who love and admire you, you will without the most constant watchfulness be continually falling into self-seeking and self-applause.

I fear, my love, you will soon think me too plain in my speaking, but I cannot answer it to my conscience, since what has past between us, not to warn you of every thing which seems to me to prevent your progress in grace. Don't imagine though that I wish you would not make this visit to Mrs. ***, quite the contrary; but I wish you to keep the most constant guard upon your own heart, that what should be for your health be not unto you an occasion of falling.

I am your ever sincere and affectionate, &c.

My dear Friend,

I Think by your account of the state of your mind, you have gained some ground since I saw you. Oh be careful! It is a dreadful thing to go back. Shun, as you would the deadliest poison, every thing which flatters your self-love. Never say any thing that tends to your own praise, unless the glory of God, or the good of your neighbour is immediately concerned in it, and may the God of peace fill you with all peace and joy in believing.

Amen. Amen.



My dear Friend,

I Thank God, that you now see the danger of wandering imaginations in a clearer light; but I cannot guess what schemes a heart like yours (which I should hope was *desirous* of nothing but what immediately tended to increase in it the love of God) can pursue, which are not for what we call *doing good*. Depend upon it, my dear, if you can by an act of your will waste a thought on any future view of happiness, that regards only your situation in this world, you are yet far from the kingdom of God. To a soul, that has but the *lowest* sense of

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the pardoning love of God, every thing that does not lead to a greater sense of this love is insipid. Outward things, according to the present circumstances we are in, ought to be attended to with prudence, though not with anxiousness; but that soul which runs out after them in *future* ought to tremble. My dear creature, are we not every moment on the brink of eternity, and may plunge *in* the next, for ought we know. What then have we to do but every moment to grasp after new degrees of grace, new power over sin, a still higher sense of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts? "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord?"— Alas! what is a life of sixty or seventy years (supposing we could be certain of so many) to attain universal holiness? And shall we lose a moment? Outwardly we must a great many, but still our hearts may be gaining ground in the steady pursuit of that end, for which we were created, and to which we have such glorious encouragements. What! shall Christ cry out to us in vain, "Give me thy heart," or shall we dare to divide that heart, which cost him so dear? Oh my friend, be jealous for your redeeming God. Suffer not that soul, for which he shed his precious blood, to stray one moment from him.

I am sorry you found pleasure at *Vaux-Hall*. I could not have believed it had you not told me so yourself. I see, my love, I have thought far too highly

highly of you. What a frightful distance is there still between you, and a christian ! Could any one who had the mind which was in Christ, have felt pleasure where they saw God dishonoured, and their fellow-creatures running headlong to destruction ? You had reason indeed to be ashamed, and thank God that you was so. The curiosity in regard to the astronomical instruments might distract your mind for a longer time, but your taking delight in these did not shew such an excessive depravity of heart, as the other : for astronomy is only accidentally made a means of dishonouring God, and hurting the souls of men, but *Vaux-Hall* is necessarily so.

I am your ever affectionate, &c.

I Write, my love, to you to thank you for the pleasure you gave me last *Thursday*, and still to urge you more and more continually to press forwards. Young as you are, you may perhaps be very near the end of your course, and the time given you to work in *may*, for ought you know, be very nearly elapsed. That form of yours, which now delights the eyes of your friend, and seems to promise a long continuance of health and vigour, may soon perhaps become defaced and loathsome, meat for crawling

crawling worms, and that soul, that precious and immortal soul of yours, which is now far from loving its creator as it ought to do, may soon stand naked in the sight of that God, to whom it has been ungrateful — its day of probation past — and its lot cast for a whole eternity. Oh my friend, my dearest companion in my pilgrimage, I conjure you by all your heart holds dear, that you lose not a moment ! Oh may that God, who is love itself, so inflame your soul with a sense of his love, as may consume all its dross, and make it through Christ an acceptable sacrifice to himself ! I think the last time I saw you I had the satisfaction of observing less of self-seeking in you, than I ever did before. Sure God will give me greatly to rejoice in you. Farewel. Whenever, my love, I think too well of you, fail not to tell me, and take shame to yourself for deceiving me.

I am yours, &c.

My dear Friend,

I Thank you for your letters, and rejoice at a great part of the account you give me. You have been very happy indeed ; and it seems to me, that God gave you this happiness as preparatory to

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the trials, which were to ensue, and if you should after this goodness of God towards you grieve his Holy Spirit, by suffering your heart to indulge any temper, which you know to be contrary to his will, what words would be strong enough to paint your black ingratitude? I will deal plainly with you. I think you are now in a most dangerous situation. Every thing around you will conspire to tempt you to the sin which most easily besets you, and therefore you must not be *one moment* off your guard. You must pray without ceasing, even in the fullest sense of the words, and constantly strive to have strongly painted in your imagination *Jesus Christ*, and him *crucified*. There is nothing I think more tends to humble us, than the consideration of the sufferings of Christ. When you find yourself going to say or do any thing with a view to praise, think, this temper, this vanity of mine added to the weight of my Saviour's sufferings, and made more bitter his cup of bitterness. Oh, if you have a soul capable of feeling, if you have one spark of gratitude, can you think this, and *sin*? Was you now standing on *Mount Calvary* near the cross of the blessed Jesus (suppose the dreadful deed was but now performing) and you saw the Redeemer of the world just nailed to his cross, say, would you help to drive the nails still deeper? Would you press the thorns closer to his sacred temples? Would you help to increase that load, which made him cry out, "My God, "my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Does

not your soul shudder at the thought? O my friend, would you not rather die, gladly die, for this your suffering Lord? Would you not gladly be cut in ten thousand pieces to save *him* one pang? I know you would. And will you not strive against that sin, which increased his sufferings? Will you not strive, my love? — Yes, sure you will. Is not every thing we can give up by far too small a return for what this Redeemer has done for us? And shall we not give this little? Above all shall we not give what most of all separates us from him, our *self-love*, and *self-seeking*? Think my friend when any one is hinting to you, how extraordinary you are — “this person is ignorantly driving me from my ‘Saviour.’” And if you should, which God forbid, find yourself tempted to indulge a vain complacency in their applause, think immediately how their praise would be turned into contempt did they know your heart as it really is, and blush for thus deceiving them. Recollect some of the mean motives which perhaps have been the springs of some of your most admired words and actions, and let your soul within you be humbled to the dust. And, my dear, I beg you will be careful how you draw praise upon yourself by praising of others. This is what I am very apt to fall into; and therefore I am the more sensible of its hurtfulness. And beware how you suffer yourself to attempt explaining nice points of doctrine, unless it is evident there will be good done by it, and then you may hope

God

God will preserve you from the pride, which generally accompanies this display of the capacity. May you constantly walk in the light of God's countenance, and go on conquering, and to conquer.

I find, my dear love, that solitude and recollection are the properest both for you and me. Pray God you was again at home! Your letter is an exact picture of what I can now conceive your mind to be — a strange mixture as you say of happiness and discomposure. And could you indeed forget God? Could you thus basely fall after such mercies? My heart bleeds for you. What you tell me of your being idle and trifling astonishes me, and that the love of the world should again creep in. My dear soul, what a heart you have! How deceitful, how desperately wicked! Oh think of the value of that atoning blood, which can cleanse a heart like yours, and constantly apply to this your only help. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." What! from *all* sin? Oh glorious and soul-animating words! My friend, my beloved companion, will you not press forwards? Will you not be an encouragement, and an help to me? Will you not watch? May the merciful God continually preserve you.

I Am glad, my dear friend, that your visit to *** has been of such benefit to you ; and I pray God to continue it to your soul, and not to suffer these impressions to wear off. Temptations doubtless will attend every situation we are in, but the soul that rests secure in the love of God will easily conquer them. I am rejoiced that Mr. B. has convinced you of what I have so long been striving to do, in regard to your restlessness after opportunities of doing good. I thank him for it. I wish you may find more and more benefit from the church prayers : they are for human compositions very excellent, and I believe the best *form* of prayers that ever was put together. I cannot reproach you for that which God has pardoned, but you certainly ought now to be more watchful, that you fall not again : for then great indeed would be your condemnation. The danger which may accrue to you by going to Miss *** will I find be known to you by experience *only*. She is certainly a good creature herself, and I love her ; but there is a spirit haunts her lodgings which is absolutely contrary to the spirit I am seeking after, and therefore was I not acquainted there, and had heard as much as I know now, I should be very careful how I entered myself. She is not capable, my dear, of watching your words with any ill design. Her only view is to find out your errors, and if possible cure you of them. I doubt not but if you could converse with her

alone, and keep clear of disputes, she might be of great use to you, and I hope God will bless this and every other means to the good of your soul. The most excellent people in the world will be of little avail, unless his Spirit affiſts, and with this there is nothing ſo weak or mean, but what may tend to increase his love in our hearts. For my own part silence and solitude ſeem at present best for me, and I am more hurt by ſome religious people, whom I converse with, than by the people of the world. Indeed there is scarce any, who does not in ſome measure hurt me, except Mr. ***. Numberleſs are the ſnares that lay in our way to the heavenly kingdom. 'Tis truly a warfare, and a very difficult one, but the crown that awaits us at the end is well worth the ſtriving for, even unto blood. Besides the encouragements and comforts we find in the way are glorious: ſure I am that *Alexander* never found ſo much joy in all his conquests, as the soul that presses after the foot-steps of Christ does in one conquest over self-will. There is more delight in ſuffering for God, than in reigning with the world. To clasp the crois of Christ close to the heart is more happiness than angels can give; and what inexpressible satisfaction is it to a soul, whose every faculty loves its Redeemer, to cry out,

Give

Give me to feel thine agonies,
 One drop of thy sad cup afford ;
 I fain with thee would sympathize,
 And share the sufferings of my Lord.

Oh God of unspeakable mercy, unbounded love, how little is all we can do or suffer for thee ! Oh that we might not have a thought, nor even a pulse beat, but for our God ! What is all that earth or heaven itself can give in comparison of thee ? Oh uncreated beauty, how does every other excellence fade away at thy presence ! How does a taste of thy love make every other love insipid ! and a ray of thy light darken the brightest of created beings ! Oh when, when shall our souls be wholly swallowed up in thee ! When shall we know thee even also as we are known ! Thou knowest the desire of our hearts, thou seest how our souls stretch, and pant after thee, even to fainting ! Oh give us to drink of the waters of life, even in this our pilgrimage, until we come to drink freely of them from that river, which proceedeth out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb for ever and ever. *Amen,*
Lord Jesus.

My beloved Friend,

I Have been admiring the goodness of God to you, in ordering your being at L*** at a time, when it must, instead of being hurtful, be profitable to your soul. The attending the sick bed of a dear relation in danger of death, is a most glorious time for exercising a number of christian graces. Such a scene as this keeps the mind in a most proper temper, humble, recollected, serious ; and in your particular circumstances this illness of *** has freed you from most of the snares you apprehended. How does every thing work together for good to those who love God ! and how ungrateful is that heart, which does not strive more and more to love him in deed and in truth ! What, my love, are the inward temptations you complain of, and what are those unaccountable scruples ? The best thing you can do is not to argue about them in your own mind, but immediately fly to prayer ; and if you cannot pray, only wish earnestly to pray. 'Tis right, that you should think yourself the vilest creature breathing, and I am every day more and more convinced, that every soul which really loves God must necessarily in its own particular think the same : and in whatever proportion the love of God increases in the soul, in the same proportion will the sense of its own vileness and helplessness increase, till at last it is in a manner annihilated

hilated before God. This is a point which the wisdom of the world cannot understand, and which no scheme of doctrine can teach the heart; but when we truly know Jesus Christ crucified, then we can truly cry out, What! *to me* such love? to the vilest and most ungrateful of all creatures, dearest Saviour, whence such love to me?

I grieve for the sin you fell into. Had the temper of your mind been really charitable, you certainly could not lightly have spoken evil of any one. Nothing is more contrary to the true spirit of the gospel, than this want of universal love, and yet there is nothing so common even among those who in most other respects are unblameable. How ought we every moment to watch! Oh when shall we indeed be renewed after the image of Christ.

Adieu.

WHAT, my dear companion, can I write so animating as your present circumstances? God seems, I think, in a most peculiar manner to watch over your soul for good. What interesting, what heart-affecting scenes have you gone through? The account I have had of your *** death, has made me see the goodness of God to you in the strongest light, and I am ready to shudder, when I

think that it is possible, even after all this, that you should again be ungrateful. Oh watch every moment! Think what horrors and agonies you must feel, if you should now suffer your heart to turn aside from this tender and merciful God! The circumstances you are now in are like five talents given to your care. Remember you are to gain to them five talents more, or expect to hear these dreadful words — *Thou slothful and wicked servant, &c.* Your heavenly Father seems to be making a plain way before your face. I see you in a light almost prophetic. I rejoice, and yet I tremble. You seem pointed out, I think, as an instrument in the hands of God for the conversion of Miss ***; but here you will be in danger from your old enemies, pride, and love of teaching, and above all that self-setting-up which you have found so difficult to overcome. Oh my dear love, fail not every hour of the day to pray particularly for humility. I trust you are not in danger from any increase of fortune. No surely. The heart of my beloved friend cannot be so mean and low, as to pride itself in dross and dirt. Perhaps you will find some difficulties in regard to the tempers of your ***; how necessary will it be for you in this case to place constantly before your eyes the meekness and lowness of the Lamb of God, and fear not, you will in all these things be more than conqueror through him, who has loved you, and redeemed you to himself by his most precious blood.

I pity you, my dear friend; I saw yesterday that your head was full, and your heart not so warm towards God as it sometimes is. Oh when shall we be free from these distractions, or rather when shall our love to our Redeemer be so intense, that our hearts may be constantly fixed on him, and we (as it were) walk through the fire without being burnt. I remember having sometimes said to you the beginning of last summer, "There is more a vast deal in faith than we all imagine;" and though, thanks to the free grace of God, we both know more of faith now, than we did at that time, yet I may still repeat the saying, and may continue to repeat it, till our eyes are fully opened in eternity. "All things are possible to him that believeth," said the God of truth, and why then do not you and I conquer all sin? Because we do not believe. The unbounded riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus are hardly more astonishing, than the perverseness of that soul, which will not fully trust in them. Christ stands ever ready to save to the uttermost, if we will but believe, that he can, and will do it; and we draw back and shrink from his redeeming hand. We suffer the dark clouds of our fallen nature to obscure the glorious light of the promises of God, and though our heads may be fully convinced of their truth, and we may have some desires of attaining them, yet there is in the centre of our souls an hidden

root of unbelief, which just as we are going to lay hold on the prize whispers — “ How can these things be ? ” and then we sink. I have heard it observed of the eagle, that she holds her young ones full against the bright beams of the mid-day sun : if they behold it stedfastly she nourishes them, but if they turn away their heads or shut their eyes, she dashes them to the ground. There is something very striking in this. A nominal believer, who makes a profession of holiness, has all the outward marks of a true believer, as these dastard eagles have of the others, but he cannot look stedfastly at the glorious beams of the sun of righteousness : and how dreadful is the consequence ? Oh my love, how ought we to watch and pray ! How careful ought we to be not to lose sight for one moment of our immaterial sun, lest the eye of our minds should by that means contract a dimness and weakness, which might render us incapable of stedfastly beholding him, when he shall appear in all the fulness of his glory. May the God of mercy preserve you in all temptations, and be your portion in time and in eternity.

My
nobill us elect two to preside over the birds
woe

My dear Friend,

I Praise God with my whole heart for your happiness and strength, and I pray him to increase it every moment. Oh may that blessed peace never leave your soul: it is eternal life begun in it, and ten thousands laid in the balance with this peace would be all lighter than vanity. It is a glorious sign, that in outward troubles, or inward temptations, you can leave the means of your deliverance intirely to God, without suffering your imagination to run out after the manner in which you probably may be delivered: Oh that we could always venture ourselves upon the mercies of our God. Then would he indeed work wonders for us — wonders which we now can scarce believe, though the God of truth himself declares them unto us. And this God will surely keep you in the dangers to which you are going to be exposed, if you will be watchful to keep the eye of your mind constantly turned towards him, and wait and hang upon him, as a little child on its fond parent, drawing all your help, all your comfort from him, and him alone. If you have but little outward retirement, shut more closely the door of your heart, and there in its inmost recesses commune with your God, and Redeemer, there be continually crying unto him — Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee; — thou knowest; O life and joy of my soul, that I desire nothing but to do thy perfect

B 3. will,

will, and to be conformed to the likeness of thy sufferings, as well as to the likeness of thy resurrection. Oh crucify in me the whole body of sin and self. Give me an humble, a mortified, and child-like spirit, and in thine own good time perfect the work thou hast begun in my soul.

As to being obliged to talk, take care that you make it matter of mortification to you, and it will not hurt you. But one may a good deal avoid talking, by seeming to give attention to what others say, and giving now and then a monosyllable, and a smile of complacency. This will please your company more than if you talked yourself: and all this while your heart may be, where it ought to be, and you may hold a conversation which they know not of.

As to examples which are not good, I hope I may say, that all the effect they can have upon my beloved friend (in her present happy state of mind) will be to drive her nearer to her God, and in that nearness what comfort does the believing soul find?

What tho' earth and hell engage
To shake that soul with fear;
Calmly it defies the rage
Of persecution near.

Suffering faith shall brighter grow,
As gold when in the furnace tried;
Only Jesus will we know,
And Jesus crucified.

Yes,

Yes, my love, let those who stile themselves our best friends join with the world in calling us *mopes*, and *enthusiasts*, still steadfastly fixed on the rock which cannot be moved, we will endure, nay joyfully take up the reproach for his sake, who hid not his blessed face from shame and spitting for our sakes, to make us (accursed and lost creatures) heirs of eternal glory. Oh that his strength may but accompany us, and the light of his countenance continually abide with us; and then we shall not fail to go on conquering and to conquer. *Amen.*

For God's sake avoid disputes of all kinds. I was delighted the last time you was with me, to observe that you was greatly altered for the better in this respect. Think not that I will omit to pray for you, and fail not to pray for me. Oh my friend, soon will time be swallowed up in eternity.


 I Readily believe you, my dear friend, that you have not brought back the same heart you carried with you: for I thought I discovered the two last times I saw you, a falling off from the grace you had and the happy state of mind you had been in; but for God's sake strive to recover yourself before you are sunk lower. Think how dreadful your case will be, if you should so grieve the Spirit of God,

God, as to cause him to depart from you. I know your heart to be ungrateful and deceitful, and you yourself know full well how much it is so ; but fear not to search into its most hidden corruptions. Was it ten times more vile and polluted than it is, the blood of Jesus is all-sufficient to cleanse it. And my dear soul, let me intreat of you earnestly to seek after a clear and constant sense of the pardoning love of God. This only can enable you to trample all temptations under your feet : believe me, unless you really walk in the light of his countenance, you never can conquer all the powers and works of darkness. Oh seek the peace which passes all understanding. You have need enough of it, I am sure, considering the many snares you walk in. I really fear you do not diligently seek after God : 'tis very certain they that seek shall find ; and therefore that the Redeemer is not fully manifested in your soul is entirely owing to your sloth and negligence. How is it possible for you to keep your ground against temptations which are continually striking upon your senses, unless you have *in* you the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen ? When our understandings are clear in gospel doctrines, we are too apt to imagine our hearts are so. My dear friend, for God's sake deceive not yourself. Oh suffer not your soul to rest, till you can say with full assurance of faith, “ My sins are forgiven.” Depend upon it this is the first step in true christianity. Oh cry to God every

every moment from the bottom of your heart, and he will do more for you, than you can either ask or think. I am a witness of his free and boundless mercy. For some days past I have been in the wilderness, my soul weary, faint, and desolate; mountains seemed to press it down, when it would have laid hold on the blood of atonement; no rejoicing in God; not one ray from the sun of righteousness: but this morning, this blessed morning, my beloved returned to my soul, and I rejoiced with joy unspeakable, and could say with the fullest assurance, " My sins are done away — Christ is mine — " God the Father is my reconciled father — God " the Holy Ghost is my comforter and guide." Oh my friend, my heart is now so overwhelmed I can scarce write. I could repeat a thousand and a thousand times over — *Christ is mine.* My soul is ready to spring out of its prison, and I could at this moment face death in all its most horrible prospects to go to my Redeemer. Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? My dear love, you know not what you lose by your negligence. Oh seek, strive, agonise; could you suffer the utmost tortures in body or mind, they would be all as nothing to gain one moment of this sweetnes: and Oh pray for me, that I may not by fining grieve the blessed comforter, and lose my present peace. God be with you my dear friend. God bless you both now and for ever..

My

My dear Friend,

I Thank God for the blessings you have received, and wish they may increase more and more. If you can really say, Christ loved *me*, and died for *me*, 'tis impossible you should be miserable ; and he will as surely free you from all your sins, as he now lives to make intercession for you. Mr. ***'s sermon was a delightful one, and I thank God I enjoyed it. I am glad you partook of this feast, and may the second part of it be still more blessed to your soul. When Mr. *** took his text, a lady in the next pew said loud enough for me to hear — “ What nothing but sheep ! ” At first this speech shocked me, and raised my indignation ; but poor soul, pity was her due. And how thankful ought we to be, that can delight in the name of sheep, that we can understand the voice of our Shepherd, and be led by him into green pastures and by the waters of comfort. No wonder that Christ appeared to you during this sermon in so amiable a light ; for there is something in the character of the good Shepherd peculiarly endearing : but indeed in every character and in every view, our Redeemer is the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely. The tongue of angels would fail to tell what Christ is to the believing soul ; and if he appears thus transcendently lovely to us here, what must he do, when this veil of flesh is entirely taken away ?

away? Dwell upon this thought, and let your soul spring forward into eternity. God preserve you, &c.



My dear Friend,

I Mourn for you, and may you mourn too from your very inmost soul, till God himself gives you the true comfort. Oh thou dear backslider, what shall I say? How shall I find words strong enough to make a lasting impression on a heart so inconstant, so sloathful, and careless. Oh that the Spirit of God would assist my weak endeavours, and point my otherwise unavailing words. You own you do not strive earnestly: alass I too plainly see you do not. But the blessed comforter strives with you, and still you resist and grieve him. How irksome is it to me always to write the same thing? My dear soul, for God's sake be more in earnest. How can you talk of sloth and carelessness, when you are standing on the brink of a precipice? Can you promise yourself another day? And are you fit to die in the state you are now in? Nay, are you not afraid to die? Oh if the Lord should say of you, as of the barren fig-tree, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground," how would you be overwhelmed with dread and confusion? For you who know so well what are

the

the glorious promises of the gospel, to suffer your thoughts to run upon worldly things is inexcusable. It seems strange, that you should think you love Christ more than you did, when you was in a better state; however above all things hold fast, and strive to increase this love, but then at the same time take care that you hate sin in the same proportion, and that you strive against it with the utmost earnestness; for to talk of loving Christ, and at the same time to give way to sloth, carelessness, and worldly-mindedness, is an abominable mockery. If you are encompassed with ten thousand temptations never fear, so your own heart consent not to them. Your blessed master will surely help you, if you can but trust him: and never give way, I intreat of you, to that *seeming* impossibility of praying. Though perhaps you cannot pray with comfort, or with any kind of connection, yet if you be ever so distracted you may surely cry, Lord, have mercy upon me — dearest Jesus, pity me. Or even supposing you could not do this from your heart, ask yourself whether you do not desire to pray; and if you do, thank God for that desire, and the next thought will be a prayer. Could you not make the increase of your family profitable; by joining at stated times of the day in some act of devotion? If it were but for one quarter of an hour at a time, there would doubtless be a blessing attending it. Suppose you were to sing an hymn together, or by turns pray, either from some form
of

of prayer, or, what would be infinitely better, extempore. You ought rather to be silent, and be thought a mope, than to join in trifling discourse. Consider, my love, you are to set an example to your young friends; and fear not but God will deliver you from this bondage into the glorious liberty of his children. The feeble trust you now have is the work of his blessed Spirit, and he will increase it into an holy confidence. Let not therefore your comfort sicken, but trust in that Jesus, who died that you might live; to whose all-merciful bosom I commit you,

And am your affectionate Friend, &c.



* At the bottom of a letter are these words:

* My dear Friend,

— ALL these worldly things only serve to draw your mind from God, and I do sincerely pity you: I only wonder that your goings are not still more uneven, or indeed that you go at all. Your fertile imagination with all this to work upon is, like a quicksand, ready to swallow up your soul. Oh my love, tremble for yourself. Indeed you have cause. I know your scheming head, I know

know how it is a running now. Oh seek earnestly after the sweet love of God, one moment's sense of that is worth ten thousand worlds. The Lord Jesus blefs you, and keep you.



How ad this writing bellied and to show all my love.

My dear Friend,

I Hope your present circumstances do not prevent your constant watching over your own heart, and pressing forwards in the way of holiness. In the midst of all these prospects death may come ! And are you fit to die ? We cannot too often ask ourselves this question, we cannot be too serious. There is only a moment between us and eternity. May the Lord Jesus so prepare us, that at whatever hour he calls we may be ready, our lamps trimmed, and we ourselves as those who wait for the bridegroom. Adieu, my dear. May the Almighty preserve you from all evil.



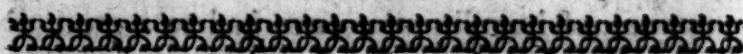
Adieu my dear friend, I have written this letter to you in a very hasty manner, and I hope you will excuse me for doing so.

O F what service, my dear love, can any thing I say be of to you ? I have tried all means in my power to keep your mind more steady, but in vain. If God at any time has so blessed my letters, that

that they have made any impression on you, it has gone off in two or three days: and when you have had those great benefits indeed of conversing with living christians, though for a time you have been raised and lively, yet you have soon sunk into your former sloth and carelessness. There must certainly be some hidden corruption in your heart, and a very dangerous one too, which causes this inconstancy in you. I often study you as I would a book, but you are in truth one of the most puzzling books I ever met with. I often rejoice to see in you (as I think) an increase of grace, and a decrease of that pride and selfishness, which under an appearance of humility you once had to a great degree. The last time you was with me, I was particularly charmed with you, and thought you greatly advanced indeed; and now you are fallen again into pride and selfishness. The Lord Jesus raise you up. Indeed, my dear soul, you grieve and wound me. You bring sorrow in my heart, and tears in my eyes: nay and sometimes your backsliding letters tempt me to impatience; but then I immediately recollect my own continual backslidings, and the long-suffering of God towards me, and can I be impatient with my friend? If your want of retirement is not owing to yourself, never lay your coldness upon that: for was your heart sincere, God would strengthen you at all times to look up to him. But if as you say, you trifled away your time, and indulged an unwillingness to prayer, no wonder God with-held that portion of his grace
he

he would otherwise have given you. Depend upon it, whenever you find an unwillingness to pray, that of all times is the most proper for you to pray in; therefore never say on such an occasion as this, "I will go read some good book, or do some good work, which may perhaps bring my mind into a better frame for prayer." No, do not so foolishly; but go, and prostrate yourself before God with all your unwillingness; and he will soon give you both the will and the power to praise him,

Adieu.



My dear Friends,

IT is impossible for me to judge rightly, till I know more of your affair, and then I doubt not, but God, if we ask in sincerity, will direct us both to agree in our sentiments, as to what will be most conducive to your eternal welfare. However thus much I can now say, be not unequally yoked with an unbeliever. To marry a man in hopes of making him a christjan, will be leading yourself into temptation. The advantages you speak of may doubtless be great blessings to you, if you are very certain you can enjoy them. You ought to be very explicit with the person, whoever he is, both with regard to your sentiments and his own heart. You cannot

cannot imagine the continual snares you will walk in, if you are joined to one, who is not joined to Christ; especially if you have any love of fancy or fondness for him. As in a married state there are more allurements to draw the mind from God than in a single one, so (if the companion be a christian) there are also advantages in it, which perhaps may almost make the balance even. But how dreadful will it be, if he who should be your help prove to you an occasion of falling. But above all things, my dear, try the sincerity of your own heart. Examine well whether you can accept this offer with a single eye to the glory of God, and the good of your own soul; and fear not, if you ask counsel of God in faith nothing wavering, that he will give you freedom of mind, either to accept or refuse as will be most profitable for you.

I do not wonder that your soul is at present distracted with worldly thoughts. An affair of this kind always occasions a thousand distractions, especially where it is in suspense. I fear your increase of company does not at all add to your spiritual happiness. The Lord Jesus bless you: I pity you. What need have we of continual assistance from above? How do we walk as on burning coals? Oh let us strive for that state of mind, in which we can say, nothing gives me pain but what is contrary to the will of God, and tends to draw my soul

soul from him; and nothing gives me pleasure, but as it is agreeable to his will, and tends to draw my soul nearer to him. *Adieu.*

My dear Friend,

I Think the questions you ask, what if I never should attain, &c. are not well. Do you doubt either the power or the mercy of that God, who has promised that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled? There may be a too great impatience, even for spiritual blessings. Learn to lay low at the feet of Christ, and trust him for your salvation, though he seem to hide his face from you. Your imperfections are a mortification to you: let them be so. And instead of despairing to conquer them, let them only sink you the deeper into humility and self-abasement, and thank God for every suffering you have either of body or mind. The Lord Jesus give you all that is needful for you.

I am your ever affectionate, &c.

My

My dear Soul,

I Am glad to write to you once more under the name of ***, and I hope God will give me strength to say all I wish at this important juncture, important it is indeed to you; and the nearer the time approaches, the more I feel for you. Alas! you are now plunging into difficulties, which you can have no notion of until you experience them. You will have need of more than double watchfulness. Oh cry earnestly to God for grace and strength to keep your soul from sinking under the delusive arguments, which your three grand enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil will be continually attacking you with in your new state of life. You know, my love, in all our intercourse, I have not failed to set before you the disadvantages and distractions you must necessarily meet with in a married life. This I thought it my duty to do, though your intentions in regard to marriage were always founded upon christian motives. Had I found you inclined to dedicate yourself more particularly to God in a single state, I should doubtless have encouraged that inclination; but as this was not the case, and I did not dare absolutely to dissuade any one from marrying, I have therefore only strove to guard you against the evils attending that condition, and pray God grant you may find them overbalanced by the good. The first evil, which people are apt to fall into when they marry,

is an extreme selfishness: this I have seen most flagrant instances of, but then the people were not christians. Oh my friend, remember you have taken upon you the sacred name of christian. The next thing which our sex in particular is very subject to, is a pretty indolence of soul, and a kind of hugging themselves as though they were become people of vast consequence; and then all they say or do, and every thing which belongs to them, is of importance. You will think perhaps there is no danger of your falling into any thing so low and silly as this; but do not think so, for without extreme watchfulness it will steal imperceptibly upon you, and if you once grow important, the flood-gates of worldly mindedness will be set open, and your faith, your love, and peace, will be borne away by the impetuous torrent. I am hot well enough to write much more, therefore shall only add, that though I cannot be with you in person next ***, yet my heart and my prayers will be with you. The Lord Jesus bless you and keep you, and grant that in all changes of this mortal life, your heart may there be fixed where true joys are to be found.

Your ever-affectionate friend
John Wesley
My dear friend

My dear Friend,

I Thank you for your last. It gave me a good deal of satisfaction: For I really think you are in a better state of mind, than you was in before you married. As to what I said of the pride of life, I think I have often expressed myself as fully as I could upon the subject; however, since you desire it, I will try to be more explicit. This passion discovers itself very differently, according to the various dispositions of those who are actuated by it. In some it is the love of much glare in dress and equipage. In others, of high taste and elegance in their table, and the furniture of their houses. In a third sort it shews itself in a kind of substantial luxury; and in a fourth, by a love of being thought people of importance. Now, my dear, it is very easy for you to examine your own heart, and see whether you are entirely free from pride in each of these particulars. For my part, I think I can with pleasure acquit you in three of them; and as to the fourth, though it is what your natural temper chiefly leads to, yet you have, by the grace of God, vastly got the better of it. The danger you call trifling is far from being so: whatever softens and enervates the mind, whatever spreads an indolence over the soul is to be cautiously guarded against.

In regard to any object you are particularly fond of, let this reflection be always uppermost in your mind, " I love for eternity," and then you will be careful not to let any thing enter into your affection in time, but what may without scruple be admitted into eternity.



My dear Friend,

I Know not how to assume to myself the character you mention, and yet I dare not neglect to do any thing, which you tell me may be of benefit to your soul. I know God can convey blessings by the meanest instrument, and relying wholly on his power and goodness, I enter again into this correspondence. You complain that I have not *lately* been so watchful over you as usual : In writing I certainly have not, and you know the reason ; but as to speaking, if I have there failed, it is entirely owing to my being so apt to think highly of you. I fear in this I may have dealt with you as with my own heart — judged too favourably of both. May God give me a clearer insight both into you and into myself.

I doubt not but your present condition contributes greatly to your being more in earnest, and
you

you have need to lay up all the strength you can against what may be a time of great trial indeed. I am glad you found such a blessing on *Sunday*. I doubt not but the greater degree of light and joy you have, the more you will be assaulted by temptations, and these perhaps not only of a strange, but also of an impertinent and ridiculous kind. The devil will sometimes play the buffoon : But I have found the best way of dealing with these temptations was not to combat them, but to let them pass through the mind, as you would let a troublesome croud of people pass by your door without regarding them.

The speaking evil of your neighbour before you are aware, though it has not all the blackness of premeditated evil speaking, yet it is a sure sign, that you have not that spirit of love, without which the highest attainments are but as sounding brass, and as a tinkling cymbal. I often am sorry to see how much this divine temper is wanting amongst all religious people. For my own part, I stand self condemned in this, though it is a sin, which I have even a natural aversion to, and I fear there are but few hearts in which this root of bitterness does not grow almost imperceptibly. However, the captain of our salvation can give us to tread even this enemy under our feet. Let us therefore go on nothing discouraged, trusting in his help,

C 2 and

and following his steps, until we apprehend that, for which we are apprehended of this divine leader.

Your ever affectionate and faithful, &c.



My dear Friend,

WE ought certainly to press forwards towards perfect sanctification, but we must not imagine it is the work of a few days or months: it requires a long course of labour and continual watchfulness. The sense of our being reconciled to God is only the first step towards sanctification. You and I, who are scarcely worthy the name of babes in Christ, may now have power over sin, if we continue faithful to the grace given us; but we cannot yet expect to have what St. Paul calls "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Nay, perhaps we may see the evil of our own hearts far more than we yet have done. God will shew us, as we are able to bear it, the strength of inbred sin, and the depth of corruption which is in our hearts; but this not to discourage or affright us, but to make us more sensible where our strength lays, and more earnest in imploring his help, who can and will in his own time surely free us from every weight, and from every spot and blemish of sin. Therefore, my love,
doubt

doubt not of the forgiveness of your sins. Doubt not of your deliverance from the power of sin. Victory, full victory is attainable, and will certainly be attained, if we diligently seek it. The danger of riches, and the danger of being allied to *** are great, but do not you see that God has surprizingly kept you in both these ; and if you seek after true poverty of spirit, outward riches will have little power to hurt you. Riches are only hurtful, when they are productive of some temper contrary to the gospel, and by looking into your own heart you might easily see, whether they have this effect upon you or not. The other danger, I believe, is the greatest ; but constant prayer, constant watchfulness, will overcome all things. The Lord Jesus preserve you.

My dear Friend,

M R. V. has desired me to meet Dr. *** at his house ; but though I honour the character of that worthy man, yet I rather *fear*, than *desire* to do this. I really now dread the being set up as something to be thought well of. I see such a depth of pride and self-love in my own heart, that I dread any thing, which can give the least food to these hellish tempers. I am well satisfied, that there can be no perfect peace, no perfect love, till these be done away.

Was not the blessed Jesus *meek* and *lowly* of heart? Was not he despised and rejected? And we? Oh, my dear love; tremble for yourself and for me. We are esteemed, admired, and sought after. Do we not, think ye, tread upon burning coals? How dangerous, how difficult to act for the glory of God, without sacrificing something to self? And this self is all that separates from God — this self is all that keeps the blessings both of time and eternity from our souls. Oh let us learn, and know and feel, that we are nothing, and that God is all in all. Certain it is that unless we die with Christ, we cannot rise to his life. Unless we are crucified with him here, we cannot reign with him hereafter. Let us then nail our corrupt nature to his cross, and continually mortify every temper that is contrary to his perfect will. Suffer we must, but the love of God will make all sufferings sweet, and his grace will enable us to conquer all difficulties. I rejoice at the victory, which you tell me has been given you over (I suppose) some reigning sin. Is not this encouragement to press forward? If you would preserve constant peace and recollection, look more into your own heart, and lay not out yourself too much upon others. I have seen so much of the ill effects of this, that I dread it both for you and myself. Watch continually.

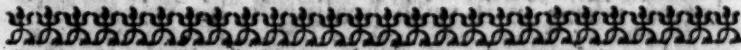
Your ever affectionate, &c.

* *
Your

YOUR letter, my dear life, has given me great pleasure. This is indeed, as it ought to be. And Oh by no means suffer this anxious desire after God, this thirst after holiness to abate, only let it be mixed with that kind of resignation, which implies a willingness to suffer, so you may be kept from sin. The pain you speak of *I rejoice in.* Oh my love, this is right, and may you more and more be conformed to Jesus Christ, and him crucified. A soul thus pained, thus longing, thus struggling for salvation, and at the same time laying low at the foot of the cross, and crying, “Lord thy will be done,” is an object in which the holy angels rejoice, nay on which God himself looks down well pleased. To such a soul every gospel blessing is near at hand. The sun of righteousness is on the point of rising in it with healing in his wings; the eternal comforter is ready to witness with it, that it is born of God, and to fill it with that peace, which passeth all understanding. The blessed and adorable Trinity is ready to raise it from its fallen state, and to perfect the new creation. What encouraging prospects! Only let not this happy pain be taken from you by any comforts the world can give, but hold it dear to your heart, as light to your eyes, till God himself change it to joy unspeakable.

I have long thought that to wish for any thing, but the salvation of our own souls and that of others

is wrong: because in nothing else can we be sure that our wishes are agreeable to the will of God. I do not know how to believe, that you could *wish* for more riches, and if the being pleased with the thoughts of gain proceeded only from this motive, that you thought God was putting it more in your power to relieve the necessities of others, I would not dare to condemn you: but it is so difficult to take any satisfaction of this kind without some mixture of worldly mindedness, that we cannot be too careful in this respect, nay we ought rather to fear, lest we should not be found faithful stewards of the talents put into our hands, as knowing, that both in spiritual and temporal blessings, " To whom much is given, of them shall much be required."



My dear Friend,

IF it should please God to make any thing I write of benefit to your soul, I should greatly rejoice, but without that my words will avail nothing; and really the account you give of yourself at present is so strange, that I know not hardly how to speak to you, or whether harshness or love is most necessary. But this I know, that my own soul is greatly pained for you, but I dare not flatter you, " If any man have not the spirit of Christ,

" he

"he is none of his ;" and doubtless to take a pleasure in exposing the faults of others is a temper as distant from the spirit of Christ, as hell is from heaven. Believe me, my dear life, if the love of God reigned in your heart, you would rather cover than expose the faults even of the vilest of men, and when obliged for their own good, or the warning of others, to speak to the disadvantage of any one, you would do it with *fear and caution*, at the same time looking up to God with your heart, lest any bitterness should mix, either with your thoughts or words, and cast a sully on your own soul. *God is love*, and infinite streams of divine love are perpetually flowing from him through all created nature. His acts of judgment as well as mercy are only acts of love, and designed either to remove or to lessen the evils occasioned by the fall of angels and of man ; and the soul which is born of God will as necessarily partake of this divine principle of universal love, as the child you now carry within you partakes of your own corrupt nature. You have great reason then to tremble, and to look upon yourself as guilty, while this temper has any footing in your soul ; therefore don't sit down contented, because you have intervals of recollection, but wrestle mightily with God in fervent prayer, until he speak peace to your soul, and his love be shed abroad in your heart, before which this evil disposition will fly as a mist before the morning sun. You greatly affect me by what you say in regard

to the expected hour of danger, but fear not. No creature on earth can be more unworthy than I am, and yet the God of mercy protected me, and gave me strength, and courage, and calmness, and I doubt not but he will shew the same mercy to you ; nay I have a strong confidence he will in your hour of extremity give you a clearer sense of his pardoning love, than you have yet experienced. Fear not, only believe, " All things are possible to him " that believeth."

It has pleased God within these few days to give me a severe trial, and eternal glory be to his name. I have stood it crying only, *Lord thy will be done.* My little boy was taken on Saturday evening with strong convulsions, and between that time and Sunday evening had I believe full forty fits. He is now much better. God is ever merciful : he brings to the borders of the grave, and raises up again. Oh how good it is to suffer ! How glorious to have grace triumph over nature ! How sweet to lay low at the foot of the cross, and bless God for every thing which more conforms us to the suffering Jesus ? Be watchful, and earnest. *Adieu.*

My

My dear Friend,

I have read and considered the letter upon the numbers in *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, according to your desire, and as far as my understanding can reach it, it seems to me (*supposing* the pope is antichrist, the beast, &c.) to be a well-connected scheme. Don't be angry at the word *supposing*, because though most of the Protestant writers have thought thus of his Holiness, yet some men of learning and piety, *Protestants* too, who are now alive, think otherwise. But don't think I am in this declaring my own opinion, for at present my judgment on this subject is almost entirely governed by Mr. ***. The latter part of the letter might I should think be of service to Miss ***, because it is very affecting; and this I am sure of, that where the consideration of these prophecies is a means of stirring any one up to greater diligence, of making them fit looser to the things of this world, and seek more earnestly after the things of God, they cannot consider them too attentively. Every soul should carefully observe that way, in which God particularly leads it, and punctually follow every means which it finds by experience brings it nearer to God. Some are awakened and brought low by meditating on the severe judgments of God; others are melted down by reflecting on his mercies. Some are employed usefully to themselves, and it may be

to

to others, by accurately considering the several amazing dispensations of God in the whole scheme of our redemption; and others by a more simple and general view of God, as infinite wisdom and infinite love, rest calmly on his will, and though in a lower and less shining way pursue the same end, *viz.* salvation by the blood of the Lamb from the power as well as from the guilt of sin, and union with the pure fountain of all happiness. All these ways are good in themselves, and are made so to every soul, which in *them* follows the leadings of the Spirit of God. But I may make that, which is good in itself, evil to me, by using it *only because* another thinks it right, and not because I really find it the means which most unites my soul to Christ: and therefore we ought never to blame any one for not being affected just in the same manner by that which affects us.

But to return to the letter. 'Tis very certain that the judgments of God are now abroad in the earth, and that some of the signs of the last times plainly appear; this (whether the calculation in the letter be right or wrong) is obvious to every one, and calls aloud for seriousness and watchfulness. Happy are those who shall stand unmoved in the time of temptation. Happy are those who when all nature is agonising around them can fly to the only rock of refuge, and there find shelter from the storm, and shadow from the heat. But above all
happy

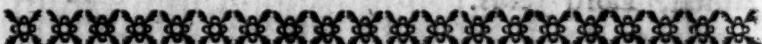
happy are those, who shall have the glory of suffering for their Redeemer, of sealing their testimony with their blood, or in the midst of the fire shouting for joy, and blessing God for a martyr's crown. These, these are glorious prospects, and weak as we are, should God honour us with a trial like this, he would also give us strength to be more than conquerors. In the mean time let us not be weary or faint in our minds, but manfully fight till we obtain complete victory over our own evil hearts; and then shall we stand with humble confidence even before our judge, and though all nature was dissolved, we should remain unshaken, and be wholly swallowed up in joy unspeakable and full of glory. Amen, Lord Jesus.



My dear Friend,

I really believe you are the same wavering-inconstant creature you used to be, and one sign of your being so is that you write to me *now* as if it was a task, which you had laid upon yourself, and was glad to get huddled over, any how, so it was but done. There is now no serious examination of your own heart, no pleasure in writing on the things of God, no spiritual affections, all is hurry and confusion. Oh take care, I intreat of you,

you, take care, and in the midst of your bodily hurry keep sacred in your soul a little place of silence and retirement, where the still small voice may be heard ; and though your *particular circumstances* divide you from your friends, yet let them not separate you from your God. The more your head and hands are full of business, the more need have you to watch over your own heart. What is first done (in respect of worldly affairs) from an excellent motive, and as matter of duty, may by degrees so cling about the heart as to become a snare to it, and to fill it with pride and the love of the world. *Adieu.*



My dear Friend,

I Thank you for your last letter, and I bless God, that you was not offended at mine. This bearing of plain-dealing is a comfortable proof to me of your sincerity. If temptations increase, God will give a proportionable increase of strength. There wants nothing but faithfulness on your part to the grace already given. I know not the particulars of your sufferings, but I know it is good to suffer. It is a discipline all must go through, who make any tolerable advance in the school of Christ. I could

could wish you to seek more after continual resignation, than sensible comfort. You may perhaps live too much upon frames. *Peace* indeed as it implies deliverance from condemnation through the blood of the lamb is to be diligently sought, and carefully preserved; but the sweet gusts and relishes of devotion, which raise and gladden the animal spirits, though they are to be thankfully received, and faithfully used to the glory of God, yet they are not to be trusted in, because in these there is so much of nature mixed with grace; but constant and heart-felt resignation is a bulwark against every trial, and a foundation for solid peace, and joy transcendently pure. The whole state of a soul made perfect in love stands in that one petition of the Lord's prayer, *Thy will be done*; and if we could but preserve that temper of mind which these words describe, I know not what could hurt us. Suppose now when I first wake in a morning I should lift up my heart, "Lord I bless thee for this new day which thou hast given me. In this day I shall have fresh manifestations of thy will concerning me, either in comforts or in sufferings. Lord I am thy creature, deal with me as it shall please thee: only dearest Saviour leave me not to myself, but let thy grace be sufficient for me, and thy strength be made perfect in my weakness." When settled in this frame of mind, suppose my trials to begin. I am tempted by the perverseness and evil tempers of my own family

family to impatience, to anger; but I immediately recollect myself, "Lord it is thy will I should bear this, pardon their perverseness, and give me to be thankful for every opportunity of self-denial and forbearance." Well! now another, and far more difficult trial appears. I am to behave to people, whom I know to be my most malignant and bitter enemies, whom I know to be continually watching occasions of evil against me, as if they were my dear friends; I am obliged to receive *Judas* kisses, and to smile upon my betrayers. Here every faculty of the soul is alarmed, and nature shrinks back affrighted. But what does grace say? "Lord I thank thee for this glorious trial! What a blessing is it I should be permitted to drink of the same cup my Saviour drank of! Oh bless these mine enemies, fill their hearts with thy love, let thy divine will be perfected both in them and me." This temptation is conquered, but another and a more trying one immediately succeeds. I am treated unkindly by people I love, and who are really my friends. Here my heart is wounded, it sinks, it is ready to faint; but recovering itself it rests upon its God, and "Lord, even in this, thy will be done, and let the sufferings of Christ be perfected in me, that I may be also a partaker of his glory." In this manner one might instance in all kinds of affliction, and find comfort and strength in each.

I know not how to think so meanly of you, as to imagine your heart in danger of being drawn away by the world. But I know I am always apt to set you in too high a light, and it may be so in this case: this one thing however I am sure of, that we are fighting for *eternity*, and this against innumerable enemies, dangerous ones from without, but far more dangerous ones within. If the Lord himself was not on our side, how could we maintain our ground one moment. To his almighty protection I commend you and yours, and am

Your ever-affectionate, &c.



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and goodly trees. O'leary of Wexford would
have liked to remain in Dublin very much,
but he had to leave - before all the
other passengers had got on board - because
he had to go to his wife's brother's wedding.
He really had to go, as it was now late at
night, and there was no train to take him
home, so he had to remain here until morning.
He said that the people here have
a great deal more time to themselves than
they have in Ireland.



LETTERS

TO THE

Rev^d. Mr. * * * *

November 20, 1754.

Dear Sir,

OU will I hope excuse my giving you this trouble, when I tell you that I cannot be easy without asking your pardon, for a fault which perhaps *your* charity may have overlooked, but which *I* cannot forget. I think I answered you with *too much spirit* on Sunday morning in regard to the *Hebrew*; nay, I am *sure* I did, because I found a blameable rising in my heart, at your seeming to think, that I pursued it only as *head-knowledge*, and that it was a thing wholly unprofitable. Pardon me this fault, and give me leave now, with the deference I owe you,

to

to lay before you my reasons for attempting, and continuing, the study of this language.—When I first began to have some notion of seeking after redemption, I by degrees quitted several pursuits, which a great thirst after that knowledge which puffeth up, and a disposition to take pains, had engaged me in; and I should never have applied myself to the learning *Hebrew*, had not Mr. *** told me that he thought it was the duty of every christian (who had leisure) to do it: accordingly I desired him to give me some instructions, which he did, and upon the force of them I diligently applied myself; and I own to you that at first, my head was too much in it, and my imagination was ready to run away with me; nay, and what was worse, when at any time I was hindered from doing the task I had set myself, I used to repine, and be uneasy: but thank God the case is far different now, and I find so much real benefit from the manner in which I now proceed, that I should act utterly against my conscience, if I was not to continue. Don't think that I mean by *benefit*, those exceeding nice explanations, which some men of great learning among the *Hutchinsonians* run into; I have neither knowledge, capacity, nor inclination, for heights like these: but there is a beauty and strength in the *Hebrew* idiom (which no translation can reach) that helps to raise my heart to God, and makes me see more and more the excellency of the sacred scriptures. If to learn

Hebrew,

Hebrew, was only to write down the *Hebrew* words, and then the meaning of them in *English*, it would be a poor employment indeed. But don't you think, Sir, I may possibly make the passage I am about, subject of meditation and prayer: if I do not, I am sure *Calasio* had better be burnt than ever looked in by me. If while I am employed in the *Hebrew* Bible, I am forgetful of that God whose Word it is, could there be any punishment bad enough for me? Dear Sir, if you could but see my heart, and know how infinitely above all things, in heaven or earth, I love my God and Redeemer, you would not think so of me! — I hope you will not be displeased with me for writing to you in this manner: I don't like, that there should seem any difference between you and me, even in judgment. Before I conclude, I must thank you for your sermon of *Sunday* afternoon, in particular, and I am sure you have the highest reason to thank God, for you was assisted by him, in this, in a most remarkable manner; I never heard you preach with such power, such strength, and such glorious boldness. I do assure you I sat astonished. May the Lord Jesus increase in you this, and every other good and perfect Gift!

I am with great esteem,

Your obliged and affectionate Friend and Servant,

* * *

Dear

Dear Sir,

I Am much obliged to you for your kind concern on my account. My illness I believe is rather troublesome than dangerous, a disorder in my stomach, which has been attended with a slight fever. I was ill, when you and Mr. *** were to see me, though I did not complain, and I looked upon it as a particular blessing: for had my spirits been in their full flow, an event so much wished, would have too much elated me; but my disorder served to keep the balance of my mind even. I see the goodness of God to me in every thing, and therefore sickness or health, life or death are equally welcome to me, as coming from the same gracious hand. Nature its true shrinks at suffering, but grace triumphs in resignation, and is thankful for the dispensation of the present moment, without wishing or willing in regard to the future. But I hope to learn some lessons of this kind from you next *Sunday*. Till then farewell, and may the fulness of every gospel-blessing rest upon your soul.

Yours, &c.

* *

Dear

Thursday, Three o'Clock.

Dear Sir,

AS you had part of my morning, take also my afternoon. May I find it more profitably employed than my morning was ! Were you not very cruel to engage me in a dispute when Mr. *** was of the party, before whom you know (though I have the highest opinion of his sense and goodness) I cannot freely speak my sentiments ? Were you not cruel to attack me when I was wholly unprepared, and *overwhelm, confound, and vex* me with your logic and extremely nice distinctions ? I have been striving since you went to pierce through your *cloud* of argument, and my illogical head has reduced it to the following order :

Justification, according to the scriptural sense of the word, cannot be had without evidence attending it, in some degree or other. If evidence in some degree is the necessary consequence of justification, we are certainly to try and examine our own hearts, what evidences we have of our being justified. This to me appears self-evident. The point then rests here. You believe that my friends require the same degree of evidence in every one, and I, if my eyes, my ears, and my understanding do not all deceive me, have the highest reason to be assured, that they do not. And here let it rest. If you have any regard for my spiritual improvement,

ment, I intreat you not to lead me into disputing: there is nothing which so much distracts and wounds my mind. I have always the mortification of thinking I have done something amiss, either said too much or too little, been too warm in one thing, or not strenuous enough in another. The strong desire I have, that all good christians should agree, love, and think the *best* of each other, is the cause of my being so uneasy, when I find any disagreement. I long to reconcile all, but this reconciling scheme is to me like an enchanted castle; just as I seem to be got to the entrance of it, it vanishes, and leaves me in a wilderness, where I might long wander, and find no rest to my weary feet, was it not for a *clue* which I hope never to let go. This blessed *clue* soon brings me again into the plain and open path, and leads me by rivers of living water, whose springs can never fail. That you and I, together with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, may ever be led by this blessed *clue*, and ever drink of this living water, is the earnest wish of

Your obliged and faithful Friend and Servant, &c.

about you and yours. And after this
ago you're in cause to forgive and forget
graciousness you have done you as if I had
done you wrong and overdone you. In your
letter you said you were not burdened with
any particular trouble. Dear

Dear Sir,

THE judgments of God upon *Lisbon* are dreadful indeed. I know not what heart can be hard enough to hear of them without concern. What but the amazing mercy of a long-suffering God can prevent *London* from feeling the same dreadful blow ! And if God should arise to shake terribly our land, what great reason will those persons have to be thankful, whom God has drawn from all worldly schemes of happiness, and fixed their hearts on a basis, which can never be shaken, though the earth be moved, and the mountains cast into the midst of the sea ? I have been much comforted in respect of the miseries of others by this scripture — *When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants thereof will learn righteousness.* If such a blessed end is produced by these severe acts of justice, have we not reason even in the midst of terror to admire and adore ? The whole universe appears to me to be in the hand of God, as a grain of dust in the balance ; and I, a creature more insignificant, more worthless, and sinful than can be conceived, am among the rest in this almighty hand, and *all is safe* My heart is by nature painfully tender, and yet in the midst of feeling, either for myself

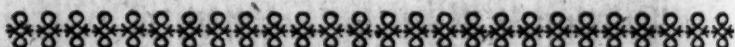
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or others, there is a secret satisfaction in my inmost soul, that God is glorified in every act of his providence, whether of judgment or mercy; and I hardly know how to form any other prayer than *Thy will be done.*

I fear I shall not see you on *Thursday*, because
 _____ but wherever you are, may the God of all consolation be your light and your shield, and bring you safe to that city, which has eternal foundations.

I am your ever-obliged Friend and Servant, &c.



BY what you said to Mr *** when he had the pleasure of hearing you, I imagine you think my illness is owing to a cause of which I am by no means certain; however the bare probability of such a charge would not be without my immediately reflecting on the dangers and temptations that would attend it: a soul, that is really desirous of attaining the *pure love of God*, is exceedingly jealous
 of

of any thing that has a possibility of drawing it from its center of happiness, and looks upon any event which has this possible tendency (let the world term it blessing or misfortune) with a tender anxious fear, which none can understand but those who have felt it. This was my case, and my imagination would sometimes paint a thousand instances which might draw my soul down to earth ; and this fear (though it never made me wish any thing but what was the will of God) would bring the tears to my eyes, and cause an uneasiness, which doubtless proceeded from want of faith. But that God whose mercies are renewed every morning, soon delivered me from those fears, and calm peace, perfect resignation and watchfulness succeeded ; and for this fortnight past, though I have been in continual uncertainty, whether I should continue in the condition I am thought to be in or not, my mind by the all-sufficient grace of God has been so equally kept, that I have not had the least wish or choice of my own, but have been equally pleased with whatever seemed to be the leadings of providence concerning me ; and you cannot think, what a work of annihilation this uncertainty has been the means of carrying on in my soul, which I see plainly in the nature of things could not so well have been effected by any other. I never can be enough thankful for the unspeakable mercies of God to so unworthy a creature. My will has been brought into a deadness which I even a few months ago should have

thought almost impossible ; and I see, and have some foretastes of that state which is called the pure and disinterested love of God, in a manner I cannot express.

I should be very glad to see you when your affairs will permit, for I have not had one help from without since I saw you last, nor have I had many of those sensible joys and comforts from within which have sometimes been indulged me ; and indeed my animal frame would have been too weak to have borne them, unless God had in a particular manner supported it : every faculty of my soul has been in a manner weighed down by continual sickness. I have not only been incapable of any outward application, but also of intense thinking or fervent prayer : but in the midst of this *my* weakness, the strength of God has more abundantly been made manifest, that I might be abased even to the dust, and his free grace exalted ; so that I well understand what St. Paul meant, when he said, *Therefore will I glory in infirmities, in weaknesses, in distresses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* — But I must finish this already too long letter. Farewel ! May the dew of heaven from above continually refresh you ! *

Dear

January 19, 1756.

Dear Sir,

I Am much obliged to you for your letter, from which I have learnt a very useful lesson, viz. never to fancy that the particular circumstances of others would be more advantageous to me than my own. You are ready almost to envy *me* my many hours of retirement; when at the same time, I am continually complaining that I have so few, and often crying out, when *shall* I have a *whole day* to myself? And then I frequently think, were I a man and in the ministry, my time would then be *all* spent for God; but now, what an inundation of trifling flows in upon me, which 'tis impossible for me to avoid, without altogether going out of the world.

I enter upon the subject, on which you bid me write with fear and trembling; my abilities are really far from being equal to it: for although I know many christians, who would immediately cry out, that it needed not one moment's consideration, I dare not do so; for I now do really *feel* the weight of it upon my soul. 'Tis a most alarming truth, that a minister may speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and that the power of God may so accompany his words as to make them the means of converting thousands; and yet for want of duly searching into his own heart, he may suffer it to be overgrown with poisonous weeds, with tempeſ

and inclinations, which if unsubdued, will absolutely shut him out from that kingdom of glory, to which he is leading others. How easy for a man who is continually setting forth the glorious truths of the gospel, and inforcing holiness of heart and life, to imagine (for want of constant self-examination) that *he himself is* what he preaches? This is a most dangerous snare; and therefore how absolutely necessary is that retirement which affords opportunity for a diligent search into the recesses of the heart, and gives the soul leisure to wait in awful silence before God, where, free from every object of sense, and from the workings of imagination, it may with all its faculties prostrate before the eternal Trinity feel itself to be nothing, and God to be *all in all*. But then it may be asked, shall not a man who with sincerity and singleness of heart, spends and is spent for the service of God, be so kept by divine grace that his soul shall suffer no loss by the want of retirement? Doubtless. Where *sincerity* and *singleness* of heart are preserved, that soul shall be defended as with a shield. But here lies the difficulty, and this I take to be the grand temptation of every minister of the gospel: he sets out perhaps (though this is not always the case) with a single view to the glory of God and the salvation of souls, the power of God accompanies his words, the hearts of the people fall under him, his reputation daily increases, till at last he becomes popular; he sees himself surrounded by a croud of people,

people, who for the most part hear him as an angel of God, their thirsty souls gasping after the truths he utters : an innocent and an *holy* joy fills his heart ; “ Here are souls that may be won to Christ, “ and that *by me!* Lord, what amazing love, that “ I who am the least and the lowest of all thy servants should be thus blest ! ” — So far all is well, all is happy : but the subtil enemy of mankind so strongly impresses this, *by me*, upon his imagination, that a self-complacency, separate from the glory of God, arises in his heart, and this, if not immediately quelled, leads him to the brink of a precipice. God still, for the sake of others, continues his usefulness ; but every conversion which he is the means of making is fresh food for his self-love, and by degrees he becomes so dead to the love of God, that he preaches even the purest doctrines of the gospel, with the same spirit and the same views, with which a lawyer pleads at the bar. But on the contrary, that *blessed servant* of Christ who steadfastly pursues the narrow path, who conquers every rising of self-love in its first appearance, and constantly refers all the good he does or speaks to the author and giver of all good, *he* shall be kept in all his ways, and blest in all his works ; and though his soul may pant for retirement, as thinking he should there enjoy nearer communion with God, and make higher advances in the divine life, this *may not* perhaps be immediately permitted him : but in order that his future crown may be

the brighter, God may make his present usefulness a sure sign to him, that he ought to continue his constant labour for others, though it should be with much temptation, fear, and trembling. However this is very certain, that God to a servant thus sincere will point out a plain path, either by inward leadings which cannot be mistaken, or outward providences. — Adieu ! Pardon the weakness of this; let me see you the first time you have to spare, and believe me

Your ever obliged and affectionate Servant,

Dear Sir,

THE shortness of my last was owing to the fear of giving you uneasiness, and throwing blame upon others ; which I must necessarily have done, had I at *that time* spoken freely of myself, or feelingly on the things of God. You will say, this is strange, but believe me it is very true ; and I had wrote three sides of a long letter to you, which I threw by for the abovementioned reasons. — As to ***, I had indeed at *that time* found particular blessings from that inward mortification he so strongly recommends ; and I plainly saw that it

was

was a kind and a wise providence which had brought that book to my hands. Whatever the Spirit of God makes useful to my heart, either from the canon of scripture or from spiritual authors, I thankfully receive, and give him the glory: but I well know there is but one great touch-stone, by which all-doctrines are to be tried; and therefore I hope your kind and affectionate fears for me, lest I should not enough esteem the written word of God, are needless: and indeed I am so far from setting any human writer on a footing with this, that I scarcely read them at all, *i. e.* in comparison of my reading the Bible. I look over some few, but this is very different from the manner of reading you recommend, and which I strive by the grace of God to practice; nay it would be the greatest slavery to me you can conceive, if I were obliged to read many religious books: however I return you the sincerest thanks for your care, and beg you will *in all* things watch over me with a “godly jealousy,” for I know my own heart is deceitful, and, if left to itself, desperately wicked.—But my dear friend, could you imagine that I enquired after the *state* of your *mind* according to the *common acceptation* of the word? (how impertinent must I have appeared!) far from it. I only desired to know what passed in your soul, *i. e.* what spiritual blessings you had both from without and within, that I might share them with you; and this I was emboldened to do by the sweet account you had given in your former

letter, of the blessings you enjoyed at *Bristol*. The Lord refresh your soul continually with the rich streams of his redeeming love, and may his everlasting arms be beneath you ! I know your present state, of hanging as it were in suspense between the visible and invisible world, is a dispensation big with divine love ; and was I to pray for you that prayer which my soul most loves, it would be, “ that you *should* lie in the hand of God as an “ instrument, without self activity or own choice, “ till the will of God was perfected in you.” This would be the prayer of pure love and enlightened faith ; but if I descended to the tenderness of sensible friendship, I should ask your speedy recovery. If it should be given me to see you again in this world of vanity and woe, I shall be thankful, and perhaps it may be so : but I know not — *something* seems to whisper me that the thread both of your life and mine is nearly spun. For my part, I have within these few days had a sweet call to eternity, by a sudden and violent disorder in my stomach and bowels (called according to the fashionable phrase a *nervous* cholick) which seems to have set me a good way forwards on my journey : happy pain ! kind messenger ! Oh my friend, I have nothing but mercies to tell you of. So supported ! Such wondrous grace ! Such boundless love ! I all sin and misery. The *Saviour* all tenderness and mercy. The *probable* approach of death delightful. No sting remaining. No clog upon my chariot-wheels.

Mercies

Mercies too from without which I had never before experienced in a time of sickness. The Rev. Mr. *** praying and singing by my bed, with such power of faith and love, such unction from above! Does this hurry the spirits? Does this endanger? How far from it? I protest not only my soul rejoiced, but even my body grew better as he prayed. Do not fail to thank God on my behalf, and pray for me that I may not be ungrateful to such amazing mercy. I have had your Dr. ***, and find much fellowship of spirit with him, but fear he will think me impertinent: for I catched at every opportunity of talking to him as a fellow traveller. I would fain have engaged him in a close conversation, but he seems too reserved. May the Lord Jesus preserve you, sweeten every pain, and make you to rejoice continually with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Your ever-affectionate and obliged Friend,
June 7, 1756.

Dear

June 15, 1756.

Dear Sir,

YOUR very kind and partial letter has pain'd me extremely, but I hope it has been made a means of humbling my soul before God. How little do I deserve that you should write to me in this manner? Alas you do not know me; I am less than the least of all the mercies of God; do not, I beseech you, think so highly of me, it really makes me ashamed of myself. Oh that I could be lower than the dust! Oh that I could shrink into nothing at the presence of my God! The way too in which you speak of yourself, puts me in a strange dilemma. I dare not pay religious compliments, and yet how shall I write to you as if I believed you? How much greater has your cross of sickness been than mine? So long, so lingering, such inconveniences as it lays you under; but yet this is certainly *no* excuse for a soul, taught of God, as *your's is*, to wish its removal. Do you indeed *wish* for any thing but sanctification? Surely, my dear friend, you wrong yourself, it cannot be. Oh remember the glorious path you have often pointed out to me, of perfect resignation; I have considered you as a pattern to me, *particularly* in *this*. I must not think that *you* have any "re-luctance to bear the cross;" it would wound my heart too much. Do I not know, that you love God above all things? Do I not know the

sincere

sincere desires of your soul after holiness ? And is there any way in the spiritual life, which so immediately leads to holiness, as *willing suffering* ? Happy are those to whom God gives the grace of *doing* much for him, for his cause, for his people, but *ten times* more blessed are they who *suffer* with Christ. Is there a joy absolutely pure ? It is that of suffering. Oh did we but know the health, the peace, the life that is at the bottom of every bitter cup ; with what alacrity should we drink it ? With what thankfulness, nay, with tears of joy, should we cry, Lord, what unbounded mercy, what astonishing grace is this, to a worm like me ; that I should be led in this *most excellent* way ; that I should be made to tread in those footsteps which are *most eminently* thine ? Dearest Saviour, sweet is thy cross, sweet is thy thorny crown ; thy stripes, thy wounds, thy pain, *more* delightful than beds of roses. Let other souls glory in mount *Tabor*, my joy shall be to stay with Thee on mount *Calvary*, that I may be made conformable to thy death. Such would be the language of a soul truly sensible of the great benefit of suffering, and embracing, with sweet complacency, the cross, which thus united it with its Redeemer. May this be the language of your soul and mine ; then shall we be found unshaken in the fiery trial, and come out as gold purified seven times. But, after all, what suffering have I had in this illness ? It can scarce be called suffering, when God sensibly supports

supports. The suffering is when he bides his face, withdraws his helping hand, and leaves the soul (as it were alone) in pain or in affliction, to struggle with the powers of darkness, which at such a time eagerly beset it. This I have sometimes known, and this is suffering indeed.—I have the same confidence in God for my dear Mr. *** that you have: was I to be removed I doubt not but it would be made a means of good to his soul; but it seems at present to be the will of God that I should continue some time longer. My inward weakness is not so great, and my pain, though pretty constant, is so slight that 'tis scarce worth the mentioning. I thank God that your health is returning, and trust we shall meet again on this side the river; but in the mean time pray earnestly for me. I fear ease more than pain. Farewel! May you and I constantly join in this prayer, “Thy will be done in us, and by us, in time and in eternity!”

Your ever-obliged and affectionate Friend,
John Wesley

My
encour

July 1, 1756.

My dear Friend,

I Received your letter with much thankfulness, for I began to be very uneasy at not hearing from you in so long a time; and you have for these two days lain with such a weight on my spirit, that I knew not how to account for it. I well know the manner in which the praise you bestowed was meant, but you know not how I dread self-complacency; and therefore though I often find that praise really humbles me (just as your own comparison well describes) yet it gives me a pain I know not how to express. I have indeed often heard you speak those words you mention, but they never affected me till now: and did you speak them in "the bitterness of your soul?" — Call me no more your friend! I am not worthy the name. How often have I heard them with unconcern, looking on them only as words of course, a kind of commonplace humility. Will you forgive me? I promise you for the future I will pay more attention to every thing you say; I will not by the grace of God be so indolent and so faithless in the things which concern you as I have been. I know I am apt to think too highly of those I love, and I hate to be disturbed in the thought. You cannot imagine how ingenious I am in casting these burdens from me: a latent fear of displeasing, and a false humility,

mility, furnish me with arguments. "Why should
 " I pretend to speak so and so, to people so much
 " more advanced in grace than myself?" Not consider-
 ing that God can work by the weakest and
 most unworthy. But cannot I pray? Oh my friend,
 if ever I *have* been wanting in ardent prayers for
 you, surely I hope never to be so again: that
 communion of spirit which I have with you in the
 life of Christ, shall I trust add wings to my prayers
 on your behalf, and gain new degrees of strength
 to my own soul.

Your last letter is a comfortable earnest to me,
 that I shall at least have one companion in the way
 which God has set me to walk in, *the way of the*
cross, the inward crucifixion, as you so justly call
 it: (thanks be to God for this refreshment to my
 spirit!) Many speak of this, and because St. Paul
 mentions the being crucified, &c. with Christ,
 they preach about and about it; but I see plainly
 that *you* not only *speak* but *feel*. — And do you
 know so much of the bitterness of the creature?
 The Lord be praised! May you daily know it more
 and more! I am sure this experience will only make
 the hidden manna the sweeter: and I am equally
 sure, that those bitter draughts are absolutely ne-
 cessary to every soul that would wholly give itself
 up to God. 'Tis easy to talk of the will being
 perfectly resigned, swallowed up in the will of
 God, &c. and while this only floats as a notion in
 the

the brain, no great sufferings will attend it. But when the soul really feels what this implies, that it is a being cut off from the creature, from self, from the workings of imagination, from sensible comfort, then it knows indeed what it is to suffer, then it fights as it were in the midst of the fire. Every thought must be brought into obedience to Christ ; and God effects this in the soul as it is able to bear it : first one trial comes, then another ; one strikes at love of the creature, another at self-love, a third at spiritual pride ; and the fight continues till Christ has brought down all his enemies, and led captivity captive. And to attain this state of glorious liberty, who would not rejoice to suffer ? What a coward must he be who would fly from a field of battle, where to die is to conquer ? Oh what blessed encouragements has a christian to fight manfully ! Let us not be weary or faint in our minds, we have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin ; but let us not fail to do it. Have we not a captain who treads all the powers of death and hell under his feet ? Is he not Jehovah mighty to save ? And has he not promised that he will save even to the *uttermost* ? The way we have to travel is indeed long, and there are lions in it ; but what of that ! Jesus the deliverer is with us, and nothing shall hurt us.

Through Jesus we can all things do,

all

all things suffer, all things conquer, and what would we more? Farewell, may the peace of God be with you, and make your soul to rest on him.

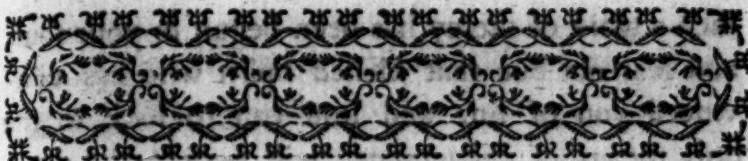
Your ever obliged and affectionate

Friend and Servant,

that of other birds are "adjudged to have originated
in Africa" (see p. 11) and this is probably true. * * *
The first two sections above, "comes hinc ex Africa
intra nos," are probably redundant, as suggested by Prof.
Silliman. The remaining text gets off base, adding Latinizing
expressions here and there, and this makes it difficult to understand.
I would suggest to omit this part of the speech and
add a simple sentence to bring back main points of the A. I would
also add a short note before the "Ptolemy" section,
mentioning that the following name is an ancient name
and not the name proposed by Prof. Silliman. This
would be of much better service than the present one,
which is too far removed from the original. I will
therefore give you bold  and you can either
alter the entire sentence or leave it as it is. I will send you
the first or the second alternative text at all times.
I would like to add that the following section of the speech
is not a good one and should be omitted as it is.
In reality, the author does not consider his suggestion
as a new one, as he says in the previous sentence.

L E T -

The original manuscript is held at the Library of Congress.



LETTERS

To Miss * * * *

Wednesday Night, February 13, 1754.

A Cold has been the means of preventing me from spending the evening in the very trifling manner which you, my dear friend, have been forced to do; though I cannot but hope that your mind, in the midst of all this noise and nonsense, has been enabled to keep itself in a state of recollection, and that you are still more fully convinced that *all*, the world calls pleasure and gaiety, is mere vanity and vexation of spirit. — I thank you for your letter, it has given me great satisfaction, and fresh cause to praise God on your account; I rejoice in your joy, and may our gracious and kind Redeemer increase and establish your joy and peace in believing! You have indeed the utmost reason to be thankful that such

such a work of mercy has been begun in your soul, and fear not but that blessed Spirit who has convinced you of sin, and lead you to look to the only means of deliverance, will perfect the work he has begun ! What a happy sign, that you can already lay hold *on* and *apply* the promises to yourself ! O continue instant in prayer for still greater degrees of faith ; and shun as you would the most deadly poison, every *action*, *word*, and *thought*, which is contrary to the Spirit of God ! And always reflect with the most thankful heart on the love of Christ to your soul : think that our merciful Saviour is more ready to hear than we to pray ; think with what joy the father received the returning prodigal, and be assured that *you* and *I*, and every returning *sinner*, will be received with the same joy, cloathed with the same glorious robes, and shall be admitted to sit down at the same *feast*, even the marriage-supper of the Lamb !

I am with the utmost tenderness,

Your ever-affectionate and faithful Friend,

My

Wednesday Night, March 20, 1754.

My dear Friend,

I Am rejoiced and bless God that your mind was in so happy a state, while your body was in the midst of folly and confusion: you observe very justly, that those diversions are *absolutely* unfit for one who is seeking *salvation*. Nothing indeed can be more contrary to the *spirit* of the *gospel*, than what the *world* calls *polite amusements*. What can be more absurd than for one who desires to be a *christian* (that is, in reality *one*) who desires the *mind* which was in *Christ*, who desires that *justification by faith*, which alone can produce in the *heart* that *true* humility and meekness, that deadness to the world, that constant resignation to God, and fervent desire to do his will which was in *Christ*: what absurdity it is for such a person as this (*in all the extravagance and glare of dress*) to be *swimming* or *skipping* about a room, and wishing *perhaps* to draw the attention and admiration of the most wile and profligate part of the human species? What absurdity for such a person as this to sit in that house, which is as much devoted to the devil as the church is to God, for three hours together, to hear obscenities at which a virtuous heathen would have blushed? — If you ask twenty of the people who do these things whether they are *christians*, nineteen of them will answer, *they are christians to be sure!*

what

what do you think of them? Or if they are not now quite so good as they ought to be, they hope to be better by and by! But can a soul which *truly* and *sincerely* seeks after salvation do these things? No certainly, not willingly: though they may by particular circumstances, as the being under the direction of husbands or parents, be sometimes obliged to appear at the *courts of vanity*, yet their hearts will even *there* be fixed where their everlasting treasure is; and they will, like the three men who would not worship the golden image, praise their *God* in the midst of the *fire*.—When the Spirit of God has wrought in a soul this hatred of the vanities it used to delight in, it has reason to rejoice indeed. What greater mark of the love of God to a soul, than his having thus drawn it to delight above all things in himself? If we love a friend, we desire and strive that this friend may return our love, and joy and delight in us: and amazing condescension! will the Creator of all things visible and invisible, the *God* who called *angels* and *archangels* into *being*, thus deal with us poor *sinful* worms of the *earth*? What heart can withstand such love? What heart but must at this thought sink into the dust, and lose itself in wonder, joy, and adoration? I have time for no more. *Adieu.*

Wednesday

Wednesday Night, March 27, 1754.

I Do take delight, indeed, my dear, in giving you any information or comfort that lays in my power; and at the same time the thought that I, unworthy as I am, should be made in the *least* instrumental to the good of another, makes me shrink into nothing in the sight of *that God*, whose free bounty and mercy has thus blessed me. I often wonder, when I reflect on the pride, the hardness, the self-sufficiency, and excessive vanity of my heart, at the greatness of that power which has *begun* to work so *great* a change, that I once so self-righteous and full of merit, so elated with the pride of *reason*, that I could explain away all the gospel terms of salvation, and trust almost wholly in the *candour* and *goodness* of my own heart, should now be brought to lie down at the *foot* of the cross, despoiled of all my merit, sensible of the corruptions of that heart I once thought clean, and hoping for mercy *only* through the merits of a crucified Redeemer, is an amazing act of mercy on God's part, and calls for constant returns of gratitude and thankfulness on mine. This change too of inclination, which you now experience, demands the same from you. I hope you will have an opportunity of being strengthened and encouraged on *Saturday*, by Mr. B. My best respects to him. I wish him to be continually increased in every

every good word and work. Whenever he has time, it will give me great satisfaction to see him. I will wait on him as soon as I possibly can. May the divine grace be ever manifesting itself in your heart. *Adieu.*

* *



*B*lessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted! Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. These are the words of the God of truth; and can you then, my dear friend, be discouraged because you are now mourning after this God, who only hides himself from you, that you may more earnestly seek him? — Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. There certainly is no heaviness like this heaviness: when a soul has been sensible (though in the least degree) of the influences of the sun of righteousness, and finds his all-cheering beams withdrawn, how painful, how heavy is the darkness! This is indeed darkness that may be felt: but when the joy returns, what peace! what happiness! Look, my dear, on the material sun, observe how all the creation around you is brightened and gladdened when he shines; and be assured, that on your earnest

earnest seeking after Christ, he will in like manner
shine again on your soul, and make it glad with
the light of his countenance.

As to the hinderance you at present meet with
from Miss B. it is a cross which you must bear with
patience, and fear not but God will strengthen you
under it: use her with all meekness, and strive to
win her by love: poor dear trifling girl, how I
pity her! How does she know that God will give
her the "by and by" she talks of? — I doubt not
but she has generosity in her temper; try to work
upon that, by representing the ingratitude she is
guilty of, in making such returns to that God who
has done so much for her. But above all pray for
her, and tell her that you pray for her: don't re-
gard her laughter; we must hope that there will
come a day when God of his infinite mercy will so
touch her heart, that this laughter will be turned
into tears, and her scorn of you into thanks, for
what she will then see was the highest instance of
friendship.—Come if you can on Saturday, and if
Miss B. likes to come with you, don't scruple to
bring her; tell her I shall be very glad to see her.—
Fear not, only believe!

*Your ever-affectionate
Wednesday Night, April 1754.*

July 19, 1754.

I Am very glad, my dear, that your mind is in so happy a state, and that you seem to have so true a sense of the littleness of all the world calls great and desirable. The love of God and the love of the world are directly opposite to each other; and therefore St. John says, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*: this is a sure rule to try ourselves by. We may talk well, and perhaps act well in some outward things, nay perhaps be zealous for the genuine doctrines of the gospel, yet all this while, if the love of the world remains in our hearts, we may be very certain we are no christians. — I fear you have not much opportunity of being alone, but see from your letter you make good use of that you have; however God is both able and willing to preserve (either alone or in company) the soul which constantly looks towards him. I was afraid your being at *** might hurt you, but thank God I find I had no cause for fear: you seem I think rather to advance than go back. Give God the glory! For whatever of good is in you is all from his free and boundless mercy; and cease not constantly to fight, in the strength of your Redeemer, against every sin, and fear not but he will set you free, take off the heavy burden you complain of, and cloath you with his perfect righteousness. Adieu.

Monday

Monday, August 19, 1754.

I Deferred writing, my dear, hoping to have seen you on Saturday: I am glad you have so just a notion of earnestly striving against sin; and fear not, but go on in the strength of your Redeemer, and he will assuredly bring all your enemies under your feet: to be delivered (as you are) from the love of sin, is one great step towards being delivered from the power of it. When temptations assault you, immediately look to Christ; and when you have been weak enough to yield to them, fly to the blood of sprinkling, which is indeed the only thing in heaven or earth that can heal your wounded soul. Look continually on Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and beg of God to give you an *abiding* sense of his pardoning love; so shall you go on from grace to grace, till every thought of your heart is brought into obedience to Christ. *Adieu.*



YOU tell me, my dear, that your present dark state of mind is owing to your thoughts dwelling so much on worldly objects: but carry your sincerity yet a little further, and tell me if it is not some *one particular object* on which your thoughts are fixed, and which rivals your Creator

in your heart? I much fear this is the case: and if so, you will find it very difficult to conquer. But let not any difficulty discourage you from striving to pluck out this right eye, and cast it from you; the grace of God is sufficient for you, his strength is made perfect in your weakness; and you may depend upon it, that as soon as ever you have given up your idol, the sun of righteousness will again arise in your soul with healing in his wings; the God of mercy will again be known by you, as your reconciled Father in Christ; and the blessed Spirit will lead and guide, and fill you with that peace which passes all understanding; and you will walk in all the ordinances of the Lord rejoicing.

I am your ever affectionate and faithful Friend,
Tuesday Morning,
August 12, 1755.



My dear Friend,

I Was concerned to see you look so pale on Sunday: I fear you give way too much to fretting, and that will be hurtful both to body and soul. Was not Mr. B's sermon a means of enlivening you? Did you not long to join the chorus of "Worthy art

" art thou O Lord," &c. Mr. V. was much delighted, and so far from being offended at the lawn-sleeves, we were *all* pleased: for 'tis very certain that people cannot be too much warned of the danger of resting either in forms or doctrines. Let your opinions or mode of worship be ever so orthodox, they profit little while the soul remains a slave to every hurtful and foolish lust! Let the society of professors to which we are joined be ever so far from antichristian doctrines, it little avails us while we have an antichrist within, a proud heart setting itself up against Christ, and an idol temple, where interest, pleasure, and vanity, are exalted in our affections above God. Let you and I, my dear, take care that our hearts condemn us not in this! Let Christ be " Lord, of every motion there!" Let us bewatchful not to " grieve the blessed Spirit!" but always attentive to the " still small voice," which if we stifle it not, will be heard in our souls: let us be faithful to every degree of grace given unto us, that so we may go on from grace to glory, through the merits and mediation of Jesus. *Adieu.*

Your ever-affectionate

My dear Friend,

YOUR last letter gave me great pleasure: I sincerely rejoice in the happiness of your soul, as in that of my own, and I hope God will strengthen you more and more by his grace, so that you may forsake every thing for him. Above all sacrifice your own will: let this constantly be the language of your heart, " Lord not my will, but thine be done." Strive not only to be content, but to rejoice in every thing that mortifies your corrupt nature: hourly reflect that you are a fallen creature, sent into this world for no other end than to be restored to that nature which our first father lost, and so be made fit for the kingdom of heaven. Remember that Christ died for you, that you might live wholly to him; and the more you do this, the more you will certainly have of that peace which passeth all understanding.

I am your ever-affectionate Friend,

Sept. 16,

1755.

Saturday

Saturday Night.

I Have company, so can only just thank you for writing to me, and beg of you to keep your Redeemer constantly in the eye of your mind, and he will support you better than ten thousand earthly friends: he is indeed your strength, your light, and will be your everlasting salvation. — I rejoice that you were enabled to deny playing at cards, and to bear the reproach of scoffers; may the Lord constantly strengthen you in all things.

Yours affectionately,

My dear Friend,

ILLNESS only has prevented my writing to you; and even now I can scarce tell you how greatly I am delighted with the happy state of your mind, and how thankful I am that your outward afflictions have been so blessed to your soul. Though I am very weak still, I am better than I have been, so don't be uneasy on my account: let us both be thankful in all conditions!

Your affectionate Friend,

My dear Friend,

I Have read Mr. B's letter, and think it exceedingly pretty; the style is easy and flowing, the language soft and affecting, the sentiments he expresses, in regard to his friend and yourself, very beautiful: but what is all this to the purpose? Or how can this convince you that you ought to give up those means of grace which you have found so extremely beneficial to your soul, in order to make a proper wife for Mr. C.? 'Tis true there are several assertions in Mr. B's letter, designed to shew the reasonableness of your making the promise; but asserting and proving are two things. Whatever has the appearance of argument in this letter may, I imagine, be reduced to these heads: 1st, That it is absolutely wrong for any member of the church of *England* to attend the meetings of separatists. 2^{dly}, That in the church of *England* a soul may find every thing necessary for its attaining the highest degrees of faith and holiness. 3^{rdly}, That Mr. W. is a separatist; and 4^{thly}, That your having any acquaintance with him will hurt Mr. C. both in his temporal interest, and in his character as a minister.—The opinion I had conceived of Mr. B. was very high, I imagined him actuated by that spirit of *universal love*, which is the first and ruling principle of every soul that is born of God; and I make no doubt but this is his *real* character: however (in this affair) he may seem to incline

cline to a *partial selfish orthodoxy*. Could the church of *England* be proved to be the *only church of Christ*, there might be some reason for the great cry of schism which we hear so much of; but what is she more than one of the most unexceptionable of those many divisions into which the universal church is broken? And therefore a separation from her, though causeless, or from mistaken motives, cannot properly be called making a schism in the church of *Christ*. For my part (but I speak it with submission to Mr. B's judgment) I apprehend, that the only *real* and dangerous schism is the want of that spirit of love, which makes us to rejoice in whatever is good and excellent in people of all denominations, and ready to receive good even of those who most differ from us in ceremonies and opinion. And why a person of this spirit (suppose one in communion with the church of *England*) may not be allowed sometimes to hear a minister among the *Presbyterians*, or any other sect, if they find this minister's preaching blest to their souls, I cannot imagine. What St. *Paul* says in regard to giving offence to weak brethren, is often quoted to prove what it has nothing to do with, as I think it is in the present case: for St. *Paul* surely does not mean that he neglected those things which were profitable to his soul, for fear of giving offence to the weak, but that he refrained from outward things (such as making no difference in meats, &c.) which he as strong in faith knew to be wholly

indifferent, lest his example should tempt those who were weak to do things by which their consciences might be wounded. — As to Mr. B's second argument, *in one sense* of it I sincerely and heartily agree with him : the homilies, the articles, and liturgy of the church of *England*, doubtless do contain all the doctrines necessary to faith and holiness. But alas, how little are these doctrines regarded either in preaching or practice, by the generality of her ministers ! Let any one who has the least degree of seriousness, look round the churches of *London*, will he not see the people for the most part repeating an excellent set of prayers, just as a parrot repeats a song ; and the minister giving forth doctrines from the pulpit, as directly contrary to those prayers as darkness is to light. This is so plain a matter of fact that it cannot be contradicted ; and it is as notorious, that whenever any minister in the church of *England* begins to preach her *real* doctrines, and live up to her precepts, he is immediately called a *Methodist*. This name is given to him as a reproach, but as it comes upon him for speaking the truth, it is in fact a glory. Ever since Christ was upon earth, *real* christians have had a nick-name ; but surely no one who is sincerely bent to follow him can regard this : I doubt not but Mr. B. himself is called a *Methodist*. But I now come to Mr. B's third argument, that most dreadful charge laid against Mr. W, that he is a *Separatist*. This charge has been repeated over

and

and over again, but has never yet been clearly proved. If four walls, with a steeple and bells, was the church of *England*, Mr. *W.* might with some shadow of reason be said to have separated from it, because he seldom preaches in these places: but *this* is no fault of his, for he will gladly preach in any of them, when their respective ministers will let him; and he was never denied preaching in what is called a church, till he strongly insisted on *that doctrine* for which the martyrs of the reformation laid down their lives, and which is the very fundamental doctrine of the church of *England*, *justification by faith*. Any one who would read Mr. *W.*'s *Appeals* with a sincere and impartial spirit, would I believe be fully convinced that this charge against him could not stand. — As to the hurt your being acquainted with Mr. *W.* might do to Mr. *C.*, in his temporal interest, it depends entirely upon himself. If he preaches to his people *smooth* things and prophesies *deceits*, if he joins with them in their *innocent amusements*, which *lull* souls asleep, and keep them in an utter ignorance of their *fall* and their *redemption* till they awake in a miserable eternity: go you where you will, not a dog will move its tongue against him, nor will the generosity of his parishioners be in the least abated towards him; and all they say of him will *only* be *poor man's* what pity that such a good-natured good sort of a man should have such a sad wife. But do I think Mr. *C.* will act in this manner? No, certainly I do.

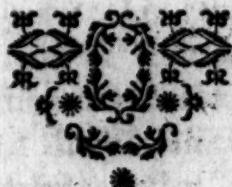
do not. I verily believe, from what you yourself have said of him, that he intends to prove himself a true minister of Christ, that he will *boldly* and *earnestly* call sinners to repentance, and that his life and conversation will be wholly agreeable to his preaching: and if this is the case, though you were never to see Mr. W. again, Mr. C. would be called a *Methodist*, the greatest part of his parishioners would cry out against him, and in all probability their generosity towards him would greatly decrease. So that consider the affair in what light you will, your being acquainted with Mr. W. cannot materially hurt Mr. C. And as to the objection of this acquaintance casting a reproach on your husband's ministry, 'tis quite needless; for it is not to be supposed, if Mr. C. be the man you can approve of for a husband, that you will leave his church when he himself preaches, to go after any other minister whatever; and whatever you may do of this kind at proper opportunities, will I doubt not be so guided by *christian* prudence, that he as a good and a pious man cannot reasonably object to it. But at present you and Mr. C. know very little of each other, and he certainly had no right to propose such terms as these to you, till he had given you frequent opportunities of judging whether his heart and sentiments were such as you could intirely approve of. For my part, by the little I can judge in this affair, I believe him to be a good and a sincere man, and I heartily wish him happy,

and

and *that with you*, if it can be brought about without your doing any thing to wound your conscience. In the mean time, whether this affair is ever concluded upon or not, frequent conversing together in the spirit of christianity, may be a bleffing to both : and how is it poffible for you to give a direct answer to a man, till you are in some measure acquainted with him, and can judge of his temper and dispositions ? I was quite delighted with the softness and affection for you with which your pappa mentioned this affair to me laſt night : if you ſay any thing of my writing to you, give my respects to him and your mamma, with love to Miss B. and believe me

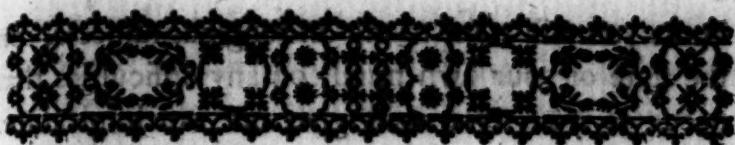
Your faithful

* *



L E T.

Hinsvæði tilgjötum eftir fólkum, sér ófær hinsvæði
 skammtiðum býrinni til gálfarum yfir meyru mei-
 rara-ferðum málum eftir fólkum, en til hinsvæði
 vortoyor gerði hinsvæði manndum sem voru meyru
 of gálfum nán og vísan, vartil hinsvæði fólk eftir
 fólkum avigur nán, vortil hinsvæði manndum
 en til hinsvæði manndum miðum hinsvæði
 rískum eftir hinsvæði manndum, vartil hinsvæði manndum
 en dígr hefðið eftir, en eftir fólkum hinsvæði
 rískum vartil hinsvæði manndum miðum hinsvæði
 en vortil hinsvæði manndum, vartil hinsvæði manndum
 en til hinsvæði manndum miðum hinsvæði manndum
 en til hinsvæði manndum, vartil hinsvæði manndum



LETTERS

To Mr. * * * *

*My dear ***,*

I T is, I assure you, the greatest joy to me to hear the happy turn which, by the grace of God, you have been enabled to take; and I sincerely beg of God to increase and strengthen you more and more in the paths of righteousness and peace: but remember, that true and vital religion must be built on this foundation, viz. a full conviction of our absolute incapacity to help ourselves, and the all-sufficiency of our Redeemer. I am delighted that you have bought Mr. Law's *Spirit of Prayer*; though there are in this book some speculative errors, yet I doubt not but you will receive great benefit from the many excellent things there are in it. I wish I could see you often; but as that cannot be, if at your leisure hours

hours you will write to me on religious subjects, on the state of your own mind, on any difficulties that occur to you, you will give me much pleasure. Don't be afraid, or think it necessary to study for elegance of style, or connection, but write as if you were talking ; and believe it is to a friend who dearly loves you, who wishes your eternal welfare, and who is

Your truly affectionate Friend,

December 16, 1753.



My dear ***

JOIN with me in praising the free grace and mercy of God, which has so wonderfully displayed itself in your soul ! I don't know whether your letter most astonished or delighted me ; but this I am sure of, that I don't know how enough to express my thankfulness to God in your behalf. The means so weak too ! Nothing but a book put into your hands, which thousands might have read without regarding it. No examples of vital religion, no one to urge or encourage you to seek redemption ! But the Almighty can indeed work by the weakest means, and the poorest instrument ; nothing

is too hard for the Lord: and Oh may he perfect the work he has begun! — Oh gracious and ever-blessed Redeemer, continue thy mercy to this brother of my soul; convince him more and more of the dreadful state he is in by nature, and the absolute necessity of justification by faith alone! Oh justify him freely; grant him redemption through thy blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of thy grace! Fill him with all peace and joy in believing, and give him to go on in thy strength, till he arrives at that fulness of faith here, and in the end to that eternal glory hereafter, which thou hast purchased for those who love thee!

Amen, Amen.

I rejoice in your desiring to receive the sacrament. The only preparation required of us is repentance, faith, and love — love to God and all mankind. I would advise you to read immediately Mr. Law's *Answer to the Plain Account, &c. of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*: this will explain the nature of this blessed ordinance to you, better than any book I know of. I have wrote out a little catalogue of books which I make my constant study, and which I hope will be yours, always remembering, that the Bible is to be esteemed by us infinitely beyond any human compositions, let them be ever so excellent. Other books I shall occasionally recommend to you, as they benefit my own mind, or are proper for the state of yours.—As to forms of prayer

prayer in your private devotions, you have no occasion for them, nay they would only be a means of keeping back your soul in its progress towards the spiritual life, the life which is hid with Christ in God. Pray from your own heart. There is no need of elegance of expression, or connection, to make a prayer acceptable to God. The desire of the heart is its prayer ; and that once sincerely turned to God, will certainly receive an answer of peace.— When you first awake, strive to fix your mind immediately on God : let the first book you open be the *New Testament*, there read, not several chapters, but just so much as you find will be food sufficient for present meditation. If the first verse you read particularly affects you, don't dissipate the idea by reading further, but close the book, and let that verse have its full effect on your mind. When you fall on your knees before the Almighty, recollect the dangers and temptations you are most likely to fall into that day, and particularly pray to be kept by the grace of God in each of them. Earnestly pray for power over the sin which most easily besets you. But above all things strive at your morning and evening prayers to gain the most lively sense of your own nothingness, nay to feel that you are even worse than nothing, that you are by your fallen nature sold under sin, and deserving nothing at the hand of God but eternal punishment; and when your mind is deeply impressed with this consideration, then look to the lamb of God who taketh

taketh away the sins of the world. There see the power by which your fallen nature may be restored: there see the blood by which you are cleansed from all sin: there see the full redemption purchased for you, and strain every faculty of your soul eagerly to lay hold on this redemption: and be assured that the eternal Spirit of God will assist you in these your prayers. The Spirit itself, says St. Paul, maketh intercession for us.—In the course of the ensuing day, and in all occurrences, strive to keep your heart in a state of prayer, always ready to be lifted up to God; and this, even in the hurry of business, may be done, and no one be sensible of it except yourself. And be sure, my dear, never to omit making use of any opportunity of doing good which falls in your way, either to the bodies or souls of your fellow creatures: to their bodies, by relieving their wants according to the ability which God giveth you; to their souls, by setting them an example of humility, meekness, and love. And this I would particularly wish you to do in regard to Mr. T's family: this will do more good than ten thousand words.—At night follow the same rule as in the morning; only examining, before you beg the protection of God for the night, every action of the past day: what good you have done, what left undone, what faults you have been guilty of, what mercies you have received, and accordingly address yourself to the father of mercy.

I have time to say no more at present. Continue to write to me, and fail not to pray for
my beloved sis moy dearest God will not let
you be alone remember it Your ever-affectionate

December 22,

1753:

ear to sinners, but not—am not notwithstanding this
of myself or others, but you are gathered
ed to your friends, & to the Lord January 7, 1754
to your ede in above said bus; but of you bus

I return my dearest *** thanks for his last letter;
the satisfaction which it and the conversation
we had together on Saturday gave me, is inex-
pressible. Oh may you, by the assisting grace of
God, continue in the happy way you are now in,
and still press forward to higher degrees of faith and
love. But, my dear, you must not think too highly
of me; I am one of the most unworthy objects of
the free mercy of God, I stand more, perhaps, in
need of your prayers than you of mine; you must
too pray for me, and we must both strive to increase
and strengthen each other. I do assure you I expect
great comfort and benefit from you. You are very
good to be so punctual in observing my directions.
Mr. Law on the Sacrament I would have you read
twice over; Oh that I could persuade Mr. *** to
do the same! The next time you have any talk
with him on religious subjects, tell him you will
not

not pretend to teach him, but you will pray for him. This may perhaps touch him, his heart is naturally tender; I love him dearly, and would give all the world to have him think and talk as my *** does.—I should be glad to know whether you last night, notwithstanding the disagreeable manner of the preacher, received any comfort and satisfaction from what he said: I own I did: his words (under all these disadvantages) raised and strengthened *me* in a remarkable manner; I wish it had been the same with you all; but your expectations were so highly raised by the name of ***, that an angel would hardly have satisfied them: and thus shall we be always disappointed, if we look more at man than God. The most famous preacher, let his eloquence, his manner, his doctrine be ever so near perfection, can never make the soul taste the words of salvation, unless the Spirit of God accompanies and inforces his preaching. And the same blessed Spirit can make the words of the meanest, the most desppicable, the most disagreeable preacher of the gospel, effectual to awaken, to convince, and to comfort. But in order to our reaping these benefits, we must hear with *sincerity* and with *singleness* of intention; not seeking to have our outward ears and eyes delighted, but desiring the *sincere* milk of the word to nourish and strengthen our souls. Would it not be the highest madness to throw away the *water of life*, because it was brought to us in an earthen vessel? *Solomon* says,

fays, " To the *hungry soul* every bitter thing is
 " *sweet.*" So to the soul which really *hungers* and
thirsts after *Christ* and his *righteousness*, the sound
 of the *gospel of peace* (let the voice which proclaims
 it be *harsh* or *soft*) will be *sweet indeed*. Oh may
 you and I, my dear ***, always find it so to us !
 May that blessed *Redeemer* in whom we have
peace, be dearer to us than *light*, than *life*, than
 any thing we can form to our imagination either
here or *hereafter* ! In dangers, in difficulties, in
 temptations, may we still look to him as our de-
 fence, our deliverer, our strength. He is *all* in
all throughout the *oracles of God*, both in the *Old*
 and *New Testament*: may he be *all* in *all* to our
souls; may we walk by his *light*, conquer by his
strength, and in the end be joyful partakers of that
 everlasting *felicity* which he has prepared for those
 that love him. This is the constant wish and
 prayer of

Your affectionate

* *

My dear ***,

YOUR last letter has given me a fresh satisfa-
 tion, and I thank you for it, and for all the
 friendly and good-natured things you say to me.
 Your answer in regard to Mr. *** pleases me ex-
 tremely,

tremely, and I cannot be enough thankful to God for the happy disposition I find in you to benefit by every thing. I think you will be quite right to go to the *** now and then on a *Sunday* evening, when you can do it without danger of Mr. *** knowing it. Pray God your dislike to all vain and idle conversation may daily increase. Your observations on Tillotson's *Sermons* are very just; no wonder, indeed, you found more benefit by hearing the eighth chapter to the *Romans*: that is a most glorious chapter, and I would recommend it to your frequent and serious perusal. I have desired Mr. *** to enquire when there will be a confirmation: he is delighted with the account I have given of you. Think, my dear, what happiness it is to give joy to angels in heaven and good men on earth. Had you not great satisfaction in last *Sunday*'s sermon? I was almost transported with it.—Do you know that your master has lately invited Mr. *** to dine with him; let us trust in God that something good may arise from this.—All the brethren of your soul (as you call them) rejoice on your account, and wish they could see and converse with you often: I sincerely join in their wishes.

To

TO day I was in hopes to have seen you. As the summer advances I trust we shall more frequently meet, to encourage and to build up each other in the love of God, and all those holy tempers, which are the fruits and sure evidences of living faith, of that faith by which the soul dies to the world, and lives only to God ; of that faith by which we gain *peace* and *power*, peace with God from a sense of his pardoning love, and power over sin. I rejoice that you are happy enough to tell me, that you daily find an increase of faith and love in your soul, and that you continue to shew it forth by your works ; this is indeed the way to look forward with transport to eternity.

* * * * *

ni firs au *Wednesday Night, February 13, 1754.*

I Read the letter my dear *** left me on Saturday with great pleasure indeed, as it is a proof that those tempers and dispositions, which I so much wish for both in him and myself, daily increase in his heart. Sunday I spent in a manner not quite so profitable as I could have wished, though better than I expected. Monday Mr. V. came, and we went to Mr. ***, who, I found to my sorrow, had had all the impressions Mr. ***'s sermon had made upon

upon him, intirely effaced by Mr. R, who dined with him last *Thursday*, and told him it was of no consequence whether people lived strictly or otherwise, if they were only satisfied in their own minds, and thankful for what they enjoyed. This pretty easy religion takes with Mr. *** so much that he is quite delighted with it, and he seems now to be springing forward in the broad way with fresh alacrity. — Mr. V. staid with me till *Tuesday* afternoon, he made me very happy in his company, and he greatly rejoices on your account.

Saturday the 17th.

I received my dearest ***'s charming long letter, and have more and more reason indeed to be thankful to God on your account. Oh how my soul exults in your happiness, in your increase in faith, and love to *Christ*! — Your conversation with the captain delights me; no doubt but he rejoiced over you — there you see the true christian spirit. The advice he gave you is excellent: Oh may we both be enabled to follow it! Those who forsake all *for Christ*, will certainly find all *in Christ*. — As to ***, I would advise you to try first to raise in him a *desire* to receive the sacrament, before you persuade him to *receive* it; and be earnest at the throne of grace on his behalf. All probable means are to be made use of, but it is the *Spirit* of God alone who can convince of sin. — I have been lately a good deal affected with the death of

a lady in this neighbourhood, who led what is called an innocent life. Mr. *** attended her, and all his endeavours to convince her were in vain : her answers were, “ Though she had not made such a shew of religion as *some others*, yet she had *done her duty, &c.*” This is the most fatal delusion of all, this blindness is the most dreadful state in which a soul can launch into eternity ! Can you and I be ever enough thankful to that God who has opened our eyes, to see the things which make for our peace ? Was our whole life to be one continued act of praise, it would be nothing in comparison to the blessings we have received ; nay even the eternity, which we shall spend in continual *praise*, is not enough *fully* to express all we owe to our *redeeming God*. — *Redemption*, how much is comprehended in this word ! and how sweet does it sound to a soul sensible of its wants ! May that pathetic prayer my dear *** has made for me be heard; then shall I experience that *fulness* of redemption for which I long ! Then shall I indeed be intirely dead to the world, to sin, to *self*, and alive only to Christ. All this unspeakable happiness I as sincerely wish to the brother of my soul as to myself;

And am his truly affectionate

son

Sunday Afternoon, March 10, 1754.

My dear ***,

LAST night after you were gone, I read your letter, and thought of what you had told me with the greatest satisfaction: what reason have you to be thankful, that God should at so early a time of your life convince you of *sin*, and give you to know that you have redemption through Christ! How might you have plunged into all the follies and vices of youth, and laid up a large stock for future and bitter repentance, had not the free and unbounded grace of God displayed its power in your soul. Oh continue earnestly to seek still more and more of the *fulness* of Christ. Think not because you have had a sense of the *pardoning love* of God that you are to *rest here*; no, still seek for fresh evidences of his love to your soul; press forward with unwearied diligence towards the mark of the *high calling* of God in Christ Jesus; seek and strive to gain the *abiding witness* of the Spirit; strive for that perfect renewal of heart by which you may say, “ ‘Tis no more I that live, but Christ liveth in me.”—You tell me you were assaulted, some days after you had this clear *sense* of the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, with doubts and fears; whenever you are attacked in this manner again, argue thus with yourself: — “ This peace and joy which I felt, this sense of forgiveness seemed to me to be the work of God upon my soul: but was it

" really so? Might not a warm imagination de-
 " ceive me, or might not the great enemy of souls
 " transform himself into an angel of light, in order
 " to lull me into a fatal security? But have I not
 " an infallible rule to judge by, whether this work
 " was of God? What were the fruits it produced?
 " Did I upon this grow more careless and remiss?
 " Was my mind puffed up with spiritual pride? Did
 " I allow myself liberties which before I was afraid
 " to take? — Or did I, on the contrary, watch
 " still more diligently against the most distant ap-
 " proaches of sin? Did I find increasing power
 " over sins of the heart, as well as outward sin?
 " Did I find in me a *still* deeper sense of my own
 " nothingness and the all-sufficiency of my Re-
 " deemer, and a large increase of the love of God
 " and all mankind? If these were the happy fruits
 " of this evidence, I have no cause to doubt this
 " work *was certainly of God.*"*

In this manner, my dear, if you will examine
 yourself, begging the assistance of the blessed Spirit
 to enable you to search every winding and turning
 of your heart, you can never be deceived, and will
 always be able by the shield of faith to repel all the
 fiery darts of the devil. I thank you for your af-
 fectionate prayer for me (may God return all those
 blessings double on your own head) and am

Your ever-affectionate Friend,

Wednesday,

Wednesday, March 25, 1754.

My dear ***,

I thank you for the good account you have given me of Mr. V's sermon; he himself called this afternoon, I read your letter to him, and he was highly pleased with the attention which he said you must have given, to remember the heads of it so exactly: I think it was an excellent one, and doubt not but the grace of God accompanied words so sincerely spoken as his are, to the hearts of the hearers, and hope it was so to you in particular. You tell me you did not in the last week experience quite so much joy as before. You must not expect it to be always sun-shine: it is in the spiritual world (in this respect) as in the natural; and that God who knows what is the fittest for us in both, orders all for the best. *David* says, "Though " heaviness may endure for a night, joy cometh " in the morning." This was particularly applicable to your case.

April 2.

I have had the pleasure to day of hearing some sneers thrown upon me for the sake of religion. It seems I keep a *Tabernacle* in the house: I wish I did; and am only sorry that I have it not in my power to give the world more occasion to cast out my name as evil. They who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution in one shape or other, and

to me it is welcome. You will, my dear ***, as you grow older and your sentiments come more to be known, suffer a good deal of this kind of reproach.—I sincerely pray to God that you may be enabled not only to take up every cross that comes in the *way* of your duty, but to bear it joyfully.

Tuesday, April 9.

I had the happiness yesterday of being near two hours with Mr. B; he has the happy art of turning every subject that is started into something profitable; and the warmth and piety of his own heart shines out in his words so much, that they must be cold indeed who cannot be warmed by it. How I pity those narrow-spirited people who will converse only with those of their own denomination! What benefit do they lose by this contraction of heart! Let you and I, my dear ***, fly prejudice of all kind as we would poison,

April 13.

I received my dear ***'s letter this morning, and return him a thousand thanks for all his kindness to me. I rejoice in the comfort you received last *Sunday* at the sacrament: may our merciful God grant you a still greater increase to-morrow! I wish you could have passed the rest of the day in a manner more suitable to the state of your mind; and I wish too you could have yesterday heard the sermon *I did* from Mr. ***: it was enough to melt

melt the hardest heart, the sufferings of our dear Redeemer were set forth in so lively and affecting a manner.—You delight me with your expression, “ If I should be possessed of Jesus I have all.” In that possession you have *all indeed*; and the heart which sincerely desires to possess Jesus will *certainly* possess him. That your desires and mine after this, unspeakable happiness may continually increase, is the earnest prayer of

Your ever-affectionate

April 24, 1754.

I Did not expect to see my dear *** on Saturday, for the weather was so extremely bad, that I thought you would make the best of your way to ***. I have read your letter with great pleasure, and hope you will continue thus diligently to examine the state of your own mind; and that on every examination you will find an increase of that “ treasure which never faileth.”—I rejoice that you have been happy enough to suffer reproach for the sake of Christ, and more especially for the grace given you to *suffer joyfully*. You may depend upon it that there is the same real distinction be-

tween christians and the world now, that there was when our blessed master said, " Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." And how ought our hearts to exult with praise and thanksgiving, when we can say we are not of the world! What unspeakable happiness will it be for us to be found (when our Redeemer comes to judgment) among those who were not ashamed of him in this " adulterous and perverse generation!" Is any thing too much to suffer when animated by the hopes of having these glorious words addressed to us, " come ye blessed, &c."

May 14.

I am now with my poor aunt ***, who is in great affliction for the loss of poor Mrs. C. See my dear ***, how little all that is esteemed in this world avails, when God is pleased to lay his hand upon us! Here was youth, beauty, riches, friends; but how as in a moment was the possessor of all these cut off! and by a dreadful disease brought to be the companion of loathsome worms! Alas, how is that sweet smile which once sat upon her countenance, now changed to ghastliness! How are her fine features and delicate complexion now become even horrible to behold! Oh that some proud beauty would here stop, and consider what she herself must one day assuredly be! And Oh that this thought might strike me still with deeper seriousness, that she who was my friend and confident

even

even from my earliest youth ; she whom I loved with more than sister's tenderness ; is now — alas, where is now her precious soul ? Dearest Redeemer, thy grace is all-sufficient, and thy mercies infinite ! Is it not now rejoicing with thee ? Were not all those helps afforded her by thy boundless love which (I much fear) even to the last her ill-judging friends denied her ? Oh had I but seen her rejoicing in the love of God, and filled with the prospects of a blessed eternity, how would my soul have joyed in her departure ! How would my heart have dilated itself with the glorious thought, that my friend was delivered from the gilded snares that surrounded her, and gone to sure and unbounded happiness ! And even now I cannot doubt the mercies of my God ; surely we shall meet again, and join in eternal praises to the great author of our salvation !

I am with all affection your faithful Friend,



*My dearest ***,*

I Am obliged to you for your letter, though the first side of it frightened me extremely. I have been so accustomed to see you strong in faith and rejoicing in God, that the very mention of weak

faith alarmed me ; but thanks be to God, who has not suffered you to be tempted above what you were able to bear, but has with the temptation also made a way for you to escape : and I hope this trial will be a means of making you still more watchful. You have need to watch and pray always, and more especially at those times when your enemies seem to be at peace with you. When we are blessed with the light of God's countenance, and have power over the sin which most easily begets us, we are very apt to be off our guard ; and by being too secure, we lay ourselves open to danger from that grand tempter, who is always watching over us for evil ; and if we take not care to keep the *loving eye* of our *mind* constantly fixed on that God who is always watching over us for good, we must fall. Here all our strength lies ; but God will not give us this strength unless we carefully and continually seek it : therefore, my dear ***, now the free grace of God has again raised you up, be doubly careful in every thought, word, and action, and be assured that your merciful Redeemer will be ever ready to hear you when you call upon him. That his love may daily abound in your heart more and more, is the sincere prayer of

July 12,
1754.

Your affectionate

* *

Monday,

Monday, August 5, 1754

My dear ***,

YOU are indeed a great stranger; sure you might contrive to call, though it were but for half an hour.—I am glad you heard Mr. ***, for to hear him and to profit, to a sincere soul is the same thing, I thank God too, that you are in so happy a state of mind, and your soul so charmingly alive to God; that you seem so much in love with holiness, and so eagerly pressing after it in all its branches: depend upon it, for every degree of holiness you gain here, you will also gain a new degree of happiness both *here* and *hereafter*. The nearer the soul is to the image of Christ, the more it will love him, and the more it will be loved by him, and by the Father through him: and this love is the highest felicity both of saints and angels. Imperfect (in degree) as it is here below, the soul that tastes it would not change it for all that earth or heaven could give; and what then must it be above in the kingdom of eternal glory! where the soul, delivered from this earthly clog, will have no hinderances or obstructions to the pure love of God, but will be wholly swallowed up in it.

Your *** gave me an account of your yesterday's conversation: I congratulate you that you can so boldly and judiciously too, speak for the truth.

truth. I pray God to encrease you in every good word and work, and am,

Your ever-affectionate Friend,

* *

{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}{*}

*My dear ***,*

I return you many thanks for your letter. Just before I received it I was thinking of you, and to tell you the truth, with some fear (occasioned by your long absence) either that you were grown cold to me, or what was infinitely worse, were grown cold to the ways of God; but your truly christian letter dispelled all my fears, and I rejoice and give thanks to our heavenly Father for his great and manifold mercies to your soul! — I wish I could have seen you often alone in your last illness, but that you know was impossible: however, the small time I was with you gave me the utmost satisfaction, and I cannot be enough sensible of the goodness of my God, that I (weak and unworthy as I am) should be made an instrument of such increase of comfort to you. Had you then died, you would doubtless now be singing praises to God and the Lamb; but as you are suffer'd to continue longer

longer upon earth, it is to this end, that you should approve yourself a faithful servant to God, in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation, that you should shine as a light in the world, and by spending yourself in the service of God here, increase your capacity of happiness hereafter. God is merciful to you in a peculiar manner. To be kept as you are, when so much engaged in business, and with so few opportunities of attending the means of grace, calls for the utmost gratitude on your part; therefore let no occasion pass by unheeded, of shewing your love to that Redeemer, who has thus saved you from sin and the love of the world. All you can do, is by far too small a return for such unbounded goodness. Your present state of mind is a glorious and happy one indeed: but suffer not yourself to be off your watch for one moment, for satan is always watching to hurt a soul that is thus happily escaped from his snare. But your certain help lies in Christ; keep therefore the eye of the mind fixed upon him, and you will still go on conquering, and to conquer.

I am your ever-affectionate Friend,

Sunday,
Dec. 8, 1754.

My

*My dear ***,*

YOURE letter has given me great pleasure, for

I began to be in some pain on your account, and I wanted to talk with you alone, because I was much afraid you were drawing back from the way of life : I thought I perceived in you something of a worldly spirit, and an affectation of beauishness in your dress, which gave me uneasiness, and I had it upon my mind to write to you, if I did not find an opportunity of talking with you soon ; but your letter has dispelled all my fears, and I have only to thank God for the grace given you. I am delighted with the rules you have laid for your conduct : you must constantly look up to God for grace and strength faithfully to practice them. I rejoice in your love to your Redeemer ; and be assured, the longer you live the more you will be convinced that this is your only sure refuge and lasting happiness. In regard to your going so often to ***, take the following advice ; shun, as you would poison, every thing that you find a means of making you less alive to God. As to Mr. ***, I don't imagine your conversation can be of any service to him at present ; for he is so entirely dead, that nothing but the immediate hand of God can move him ; therefore you have only to take care that you are not hurt by him, and never to go in his way, but when absolute necessity.

cessity requires it. Life is short. We have a great work to do, and God only knows how few of those hours, which are ever on the wing, may be given us to do it in. Therefore lose not a moment! Remember a christian cannot stand still; he must go either forwards or backwards; and if you have not made some advances towards heaven since the clock struck last, you have gone back towards the contrary road. Keep this constantly in your mind, particularly in your *visits*. — May the peace and love of God be ever with you, and fail not to remember at the throne of grace,

Your ever-affectionate Friend,

Nov. 27,

1755.

* *



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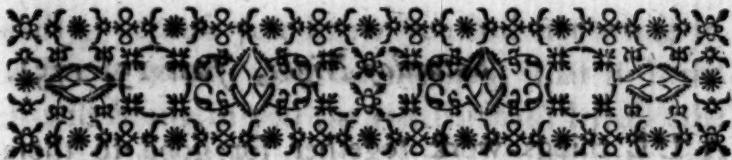
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LETTERS

To Miss *

* * * *

My dear Love,

OUR sister will tell you how happy we have been, and how often we have wished you had been a partaker of our happiness. I have been told how much you was affected in thinking I was dangerously ill: it certainly would be ungrateful in me not to love you for this tenderness, and be highly sensible of it: but at the same I cannot help begging of you, as a christian, to moderate your affection for me. Love me from the most commendable motives you will, still it is setting your heart too much upon a creature, to carry it to such a height. 'Tis very odd for me to write thus, that is, it might seem so to some people; but you, my dear, know better. Oh may the God of infinite love intirely fill our hearts with his love, and peace, and joy, both in time and eternity. *Adieu.*

Saturday

Saturday Night, June 15, 1754.

ALL things work together for good to those who love God; therefore if I write as a christian, I must not say I am sorry for your illnes: no, my dear soul, this and every thing which befalls you will be for your benefit, if you earnestly pray for grace, to have no will but that of your heavenly Father's. *Perfect* resignation to the will of God is what we much talk of, but rarely understand — it is *heaven* itself begun in the soul.—I trust you will soon be able to tell me how greatly the love of God is increased in your heart since I last saw you, and how much more power you have gained over sin. Oh rejoice the heart of your friend by continuing stedfast, and continually pressing forward towards the mark of the prize of your high calling. *Adieu.*



Saturday, July 13, 1754.

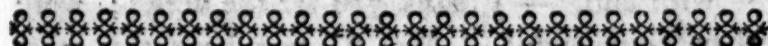
I Thank you, my dear, for remembering me, and the oftener you write the more pleasure you will give me: but you had no right to be disappointed by not receiving a letter from me last

Sunday,

Sunday, because you know you had not wrote to me in the week ; and let me add, that if I find self-will strong in you (as you say it is) I shall take frequent opportunities of disappointing you, till you can assure me this self-will is conquered. I too well know how great a hinderance this self-will is to our advancement in holiness, and would therefore earnestly intreat my dear friend to fight against it, that is, *in the strength of the captain of our salvation*, casting yourself (as you so justly express it) on Christ, and you will surely conquer. — I think with pleasure on the time you were with me, and shall I trust rejoice when this happiness is again permitted me. — Your dear sister gave me great satisfaction last *Thursday* ; I doubt not but God will continue, cement, and bless our three-fold friendship, and am, with thanks for your truly christian wishes to me,

Your ever-affectionate Friend,

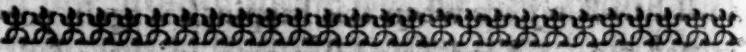
* *



ARE you tempted, my dear ? God will assuredly with the temptation make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. The more you see and are convinced of the blackness and hardness of your own heart, the better ; when
God

God gives us to *feel* that we are, from our fallen nature, altogether corrupt and abominable; then it is that we most eagerly grasp at the purity and righteousness of Jesus Christ; then it is that we see in him a Redeemer wholly fitted to our wants, one who is in truth “*our righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, and redemption.*” Study these four words, my dear soul, till they are even ingrafted in your heart, and cease not to pray for your unworthy friend,

* *


 September 14, 1754.

My dear Friend;

I Am much obliged to you for your letter, it pleased me extremely, and I thank God for giving you this excellent spirit of rejoicing in sufferings; “if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.”—I thank you for the verses; were they your own? —Mr. T. was here the other day, and I think improves in the best improvements every time I see him. He mentioned a conversation he had with you in the garden, and seemed greatly pleased with your part of it: but remember, my love, if any spark of pride gains admittance, it will wither all your graces. Pray God keep

keep you from this and every other temper, which is contrary to his perfect love, and bless you with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

* *



My dear Friend,

I thank you for writing to me, and am pleased to see you so constantly watch over the state of your soul; God is indeed ever ready to hear those who call upon him, and I sincerely beg of him to fill you with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus.—I do not wonder that you are so continually tempted of him who goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; but you well know his temptations cannot hurt you, if you take care earnestly to seek for that grace by which you may conquer all temptation, and by which every temper may be rooted out that can give encouragement to temptation. I am glad you had the satisfaction of conversing with *A. M.* May your heavenly father daily increase your means of grace and your hopes of glory!

* *

Saturday, October 26, 1754.

Sunday

Sunday Morning.

My dear Friend,

I have just time enough to wish that your soul may this day prosper, and that God may be found by you in all his ordinances. Oh that his love may be more and more shed abroad in your heart ! And this it certainly will be, if you walk closely with him, and suffer not your imagination to lead you from your only true happiness. Oh strive continually after a constant recollection, and communion with God. — I know the unprofitable manner in which you will be employed this afternoon ; but this need not hinder your heart from being with your Saviour, he will support and comfort you.—Take care that you run not into making observations either on the persons, manners, or dress of your visitors : four young ladies in a house together, are in the utmost danger from this sin ; and depend upon it, it is as contrary to christian love as lying or stealing. *Adieu.*

* *

My

My dear Friend,

I Have been thinking, since I saw you, of all the snares to which you are going to be exposed, and I sincerely pray that God may protect you in every danger, and hold up your goings in *his paths*. But in order to gain his gracious protection, you must take the greatest care that you do nothing to grieve his blessed Spirit, and cause him to depart from you ; and this any sinful compliance will certainly do : therefore when you are desired to do any thing unbecoming a christian, fear not (young as you are) to bear your testimony for God against an evil world. But do it in the spirit of meekness ; and if by this means you draw upon yourself the appellations of whimsical, obstinate, and ridiculous, look upon the reproach as matter of rejoicing, and as adding a greater lustre to the crown you will hereafter receive.—There is one temptation, which at your age is peculiarly dangerous, and that is a desire of being thought handsome : you must be ever on your watch against this, for it will raise a thousand tempers in your soul, as contrary to the mind which was in Christ as darkness is to light. There is nothing which is a greater counter-poison to this desire, than bringing the mind to be contented, nay even to rejoice that another should outshine us. Let Miss J. be the means by which you acquire a conquest over this first-born of female pride :

pride : set yourself every day to take delight in her beauty, to wish for its embellishment, and to be most pleased when she appears to the greatest advantage. — If when you read this you colour, and cry “ Dear ! what can she mean ? this is vastly ‘ odd ! ” — depend upon it there is something in your heart which makes the advice I have given highly necessary ; and fail not, as you prize your peace of mind and increase in grace, to put it in practice. We should enjoy much more of the light of God’s countenance, and of that peace which passeth all understanding, if we would attend to, and watch against, those occasions of falling, which from their commonness we are apt to call *little*. — A soul is often cast into heaviness for hours, by an unguarded word. — You will not, my love, be angry with me that I deal thus freely with you : I watch over your soul in tender love ; and though sensible of my own unworthiness, either to advise or persuade ; though sensible of my own great and manifold sins and imperfections, I cannot desist from guarding you against all that may hinder your being made perfect in the love of God. I am

Your ever-affectionate
November 30, 1754.

My

Sunday, December 8, 1754.

My dear Friend,

I return you thanks for your letter; and rejoice in your resolution of staying yourself upon your Redeemer, even when he withdraws his comforts from you. This time of darkness and desertion is the hardest trial of faith: outward afflictions may easily be endured when the blessed beams of God's countenance shine bright in the soul; but when he hides himself from us, every thing is a burthen, and though in the midst of all earthly prosperity, we go mourning all the day long; and then if temptations assault us from without, and our own corruptions from within, 'tis hard indeed to stand in so slippery a path: but even then our heavenly father is ever near us, though we perceive it not; and if we can then say, "though he slay me yet will I trust in him," this is pure faith indeed; and I verily believe a soul in this *state*, and *thus* trusting, is more acceptable in the sight of God, than when it is triumphing and rejoicing in a *full sense* of his love. When an earthly parent sees his little child sick and weak, holding out its hands to him for help, and unable to express its wants and pains by any thing but groans and tears, is not his heart more moved with tenderness towards it than when it is in perfect health? And does not the love of our heavenly Father infinitely exceed that of the

G

fondest

fondest parent? "Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea they *moy* forget, yet will I never forget thee, says the Lord." What encouragement is here? Who then can doubt of the never-failing mercies of their God?—I am glad you did not take my letter amiss.—Tell your sister if she can trust Mr. G. with delivering my letters, Mr. L. could give him one every week.—I wish you, my dear love, an increase of every blessing which can forward your soul in holiness, and am

Your ever-affectionate

()*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)

My dear Love,

B E not uneasy at what Mr. V. said about the necessity of terrors, in order to a sound conversion; he did not mean it in the light you took it, and had not company came in and prevented him, he would have explained himself.—He is sure that there are some souls whom God *draws wholly* by love, and joins with me in conjuring you to rejoice, in God's having thus drawn you in the most endearing way of his mercy, and not to suffer

any

any doubts or fears to overturn your confidence,
or overcloud your joy in your Redeemer. *Adieu.*

My dear Friend,

I thank you for both your letters, and should have answered you sooner, but that by continual sickness I am rendered incapable of almost any the least application. I am intirely resigned to the will of God, and have no choice of my own in any thing which concerns me; and I rejoice in your spirit of resignation. — I doubt not, my dear, but you love me, and I doubt not but this love will continue, at least till you are married. I pray God of his infinite mercy to keep you unspotted from the world, and am

Your ever-affectionate and faithful Friend,

Tuesday Night.

I Thank you, my love, for writing to me; and rejoice that you are happy: God never fails to hear those that call upon him, and is gracious above all that we can either ask or think. As to my illness, it is extremely troublesome, but I believe not dangerous; and I must continue to bear it for a good while longer without attempting to remove it, because my apothecary himself knows not what to make of it: however, I am just as I ought to be; I delight to do and to suffer the will of God, and his mercies are sweet to my soul. I am in that happy state of resignation, that I have not a wish, but for an increase of grace and holiness. Sunday my soul longed after the sacrament, and the tears came in my eyes, because I could not go to church. But are the flowing streams of redeeming love confined to place or time? I found indeed they were not; for my soul was at home sweetly replenished, with every blessing I could have hoped for at the altar. How much are those to be pitied who know not the love of God! How much are those to be pitied who set their hearts on any thing in this state of existence! How poor, how low, how trifling is every thing, that does not look towards eternity! I have such an experimental sense of the nothingness of all worldly things, that they seem no more to me than dancing puppets; and I am sometimes ready to affront my brother and Mr. ***, by smiling at the important air with which they talk of
their

their *busness*, as they call it.—I think there is very little probability that I shall be fit to come to the wedding. Pray God keep your sister's heart in this time of danger and distraction, and bless you both with the blessings of his children.

January 7, 1755.

My dear Friend,

I was astonished at your last letter : Mrs. R. is a woman whom I hardly ever mentioned without praising of her ; and I should have thought her good sense (which excels that of most of her sex) would have prevented her from retailing hear-say scandal. May God forgive her, and grant her a better way of thinking. As to her knowledge of me, my dear, it can be but very little, for I don't remember ever to have seen her since I was married : however, this shews you what you are to expect, if you strive really to be a christian. As to this play which you fear, I dare not advise you to do any thing against your conscience ; but let all your remonstrances be made with the utmost humility, duty, and affection ; and if after all, they will absolutely oblige you to go, you cannot help it : but trust in God, and your difficulties may perhaps

vanish when you least expect it. However, my love, let this be how it will, I beg you will by all means strive to attain that chearfulness your pappa wishes you to do. I believe you appear too abstracted in company, and this in one so very young as you are, is more taken notice of than it would be in me, or even in your sister: strive, therefore, always to have a smile upon your countenance; and, whether you give attention or not to what passes around you, *seem* to do so. — If you are forbid having any friendship with me, obey your parents with readiness and alacrity, and fear not but God will doubly make up this loss to you some other way. As for me, I own that I shall be sorry, not only at being parted from you, but to *lose* the friendship of your pappa and mamma, for I really love them from my heart. But I hope this sorrow will be such as may agree with the most perfect resignation. In the mean time, let us only think of praising God in all events, and be assured that none ever yet trusted in him and was confounded. — It would give me pleasure either to hear from your sister or you.

Your affectionate Friend,

February 11, 1755.

A



LETTER

TO THE

Rev^d. Mr. * * * *

Reverend Sir,

OUR character for candour and piety takes from me all fear that you should be offended at the address of a person unknown, even though this address is designed to point out something amiss in you; which it is absolutely necessary (for the good of your own soul, and for the eternal welfare of those who hear you) that you should amend.—You *believe!*—You *feel* the power, and live the *life of faith!*—Oh why will you not strive that others may be partakers of

like happiness with you? — I know your general manner of preaching: I myself have heard you; and while my ear has been delighted with your affecting delivery, your elegant language, and well-turned periods, my heart has *bled* to think that such talents should be so miserably perverted: *bled* for you, and for those *poor souls*, whom this way of preaching lulls into a fatal *security*. Pardon my freedom of speech; pardon my boldness towards you; but you yourself will acknowledge, that where the foundation is unsound, the building must fall; and no true foundation can be laid except Jesus Christ. Your own experience must tell you, that a divine power can alone change the heart; that all outward regularity of behaviour, all rounds and forms of devotion, and all moral duties, without this change are utterly unavailing, and only like beautifying the outside of a sepulchre, which within is full of dead mens bones and of all uncleanness. You are sensible too, that faith in a dying Redeemer is the only means given us by which this change of heart can be effected. To what purpose then is it to tell *poor, lost, undone* man of the dignity of his *rational* nature, and the beauty of *Virtue*? — Dear Sir, for the sake of that God whom you love and *adore*, away with these *shadows*, and substitute in their place realities. How would it delight the hearts of several of your friends (who greatly love and esteem you, and who wish well to the gospel of Christ) to see you with all the force

force of eloquence labouring to convince your hearers of the *sin* of their *nature*, their condemnation in the sight of God, and their utter incapacity to help *themselves*; and then proclaiming to them, “Behold the *Lamb of God*, who taketh away the “*sins of the world!*”

I am sensible of the difficulties you will have to encounter, in thus changing your manner of preaching: but though the battle be hard to fight, great will be the glory of the victory. ’Tis true, your enemies are strong and powerful; the devil, the world, all the wicked, and all the self-righteous will be joined together against you: but look up with an eye of faith, and see how many more are for you. Think of the holy angels rejoicing over every sinner converted by your means; think that the captain of your salvation, your God and Redeemer, will be ever near to help, to strengthen and comfort you! And consider what unutterable joy your soul will feel, when at that period of time which is the most delightful to the true christian, you can with firm confidence cry out with St. Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have “finished my course, I have kept the faith; hence-“ forth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.”

I am (though your unknown and unworthy)

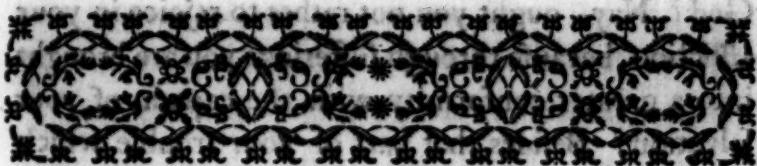
Your truly affectionate Friend.

"People like Mr. G. C. Wood may be
men of the world."

I am grateful to the difficulties you may have
to encounter in this changing world of ours
to appreciate just how little time we have
left to live. There will be time to be angry,
but there will be time to be joyful. There
will be time to be kind and powerful; but
you choose the wisdom and strength you:
the world will be the mirror of your choice.
I hope this will be the end of my message;
please let me know if you have any
questions or comments. I will be here to help.
And remember, we are all connected.
Yours sincerely, Your local angel, Your G.O.T.
and Redesemer, Will be easy next to people to
trust especially if you have lost your way
or are lost in life. And remember we are
all connected, so do not worry about our
differences, as this world is the way it is.
With love, Paul, "I have taught a good life, I have
taught my tongue, I have kept the spirit; I have
taught a new life for me to live a righteous life."

(*Arachnites acuminatus* (Agassiz) and A.

Jan. 17, 1892 - 10 a.m.



T W O

L E T T E R S

To Mr. G * * *

REMEMBER him who endured such *contradiction of sinners* against himself, lest you be weary and faint in your mind! — Believe me, my dear friend, my heart feels the most tender concern for you; and I heartily beg of our dear Redeemer, that he would raise, strengthen, and comfort you. That any one should *afflict* the *afflicted* is hard indeed: but consider, that when your Saviour's hands and feet were nailed to the cross, and the wounding thorns crushed into his sacred temples, *even then*, they gave him vinegar mingled with gall. And what are your sufferings, were they even a million of times greater than they are, when compared with those of the Lamb of

God?

God? Nay, ought you not rather to rejoice in your affliction, because through sufferings you are brought into a greater conformity with the captain of your salvation? Besides that part of your trouble which is indeed the hardest to bear, may be productive of the greatest good; good to your soul and glory to God. What an opportunity have you now to shew that your mind is renewed after the image of Christ, by returning love, blessing, and meekness, for railing and ill usage! And this too is the best defence you can make, either for yourself or your brethren. When I last saw you, it gave me great joy to observe the air of tranquility and cheerfulness that was in your countenance, even when your son was in danger: I knew, nothing but the love of God in your heart could effect this; and should now the sun of righteousness be withdrawn, and your soul overwhelmed with darkness, yet be assured he will soon return; he will arise with healing in his wings, and you shall rejoice in the light of his countenance. Like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him.

O love! how charming is thy ray!

All pain before thy presence flies:

Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,

Where'er thy healing streams arise.

O Jesu! nothing may I see,

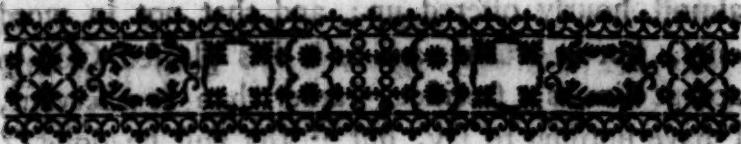
Nothing hear, feel, or think, but Thee.

I am much obliged to you for your letter to me ; and if it will increase your joy to know that I love my Saviour more than *health*, or *light*, or *life*, be assured that I do ; and that I should think myself the most ungrateful and vile of all creatures if I did not. — It is my constant and earnest desire every day, nay every hour, to increase in the knowledge and love of God, and to be saved not only from the guilt, but also from the power of sin. I know that the grace of God through Christ is sufficient for me ; I know that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin ; and I know (blessed be God for giving me that knowledge) that I have redemption through this blood, even the *forgiveness* of my sins. Think now what a wretch I should be, if I did not love this Redeemer, and if I did not wish above all things else to be conformed to his image ? — And in consequence of my thus loving God because he first loved me, I love every creature which God has made, and every soul of man, without any regard had to sects, names, or parties. The *Moravian* church, though I am certain at this time it is over-run with *dreadful errors*, I love, pity, and pray for. Oh may the God of love and unbounded mercy, convince and

and restore it ! — I thank you for the glorious advice you give me, of “ living very near the cross;” there is life indeed ! Life freely given, to every soul that seeks it. And that you and I may ever partake of this life, is the hearty wish of your

TWO

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T W O

LETTERS

TO THE

Rev^d. Mr. * * * *

November 30, 1755.

Dear Sir,

AM much obliged to you for your apostolical letter, and for the truly christian joy you express for my baby's happiness.

That I have felt all that the greatest sensibility of temper is capable of feeling on such an occasion, is certain: but here has been my great comfort, that, in every thing which concerned the child, I have had neither will nor wish of my own. He was peculiarly dedicated to God, even before he was born: and since, he has been daily, nay almost

almost hourly offered up; and that not in word only, but in truth; and as it has pleased God to accept him as a sacrifice, rather than as a servant, I have nothing to say, but “ thy will be done !” If I could have seen you, or any of my christian friends at this time, when all the finest springs of human nature were on the rack, it would have been a great satisfaction; but it pleased God to with-hold all creature-comfort from me; and though his own arm sustained me, it was in a manner not sensibly perceived by my soul: so that I had the great blessing of bearing something of the cross. And this I look upon to be a particular blessing to me, because I have been so wholly led by love, that before this, I knew but very little of what it was to suffer the will of God. In short, every dispensation of my heavenly Father towards me, is nothing but mercy and unbounded goodness. I see and I ~~adore~~. — The Lord Jesus blefs and preserve you in body, soul, and spirit. Fail not to pray for

Your obliged and affectionate

Monday,

Monday, December 22, 1755.

Dear Sir,

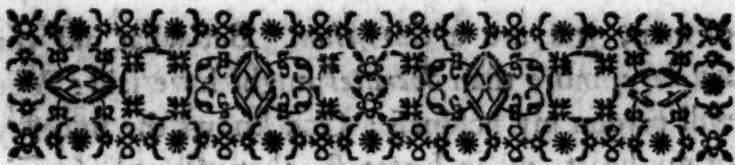
I See with delight, that you *are set up* as a mark, for every one of the devil's tools to shoot at: and he certainly wounds the deepest by those, who, while they are working for him, imagine they are doing God service, and acting with *christian prudence*. How often is *that wisdom* which comes from beneath, taken for that which comes from above! And *fear of man*, *secret desire of preferment*, and being *ashamed* of the *cross of Christ*, dignified with the title of *great judgment*, *true discretion*, and *proper caution* not to give offence! — 'Tis hard, indeed, to be wounded in the house of your friends; nothing, perhaps, is more painful to nature than this: but if they have called the master of the house *Beelzebub*, how much more those of his household! — Those servants of Christ who are designed by him for *eminent usefulness*, must of necessity have the largest share of tribulation: for the highest place of honour under *our king*, is that of the sharpest sufferings. I should not wonder if the tongues and pens of all your brethren (except two or three) were employed against *you*; and I am so far from being sorry (on your account) for Mr. L's preaching against you, that I look upon it as a *precious and blessed mark*, and a *seal* to the truth of your ministry. — Happy parting, indeed,
with

with the world ! And happy parting with every comfort in it, if nearer union with God is the consequence ! Oh cease not to pray for me, that all things may *thus* work together for my good ! — This poor dream of life will soon be at an end ; and then, if those who have only given a cup of cold water for the sake of Christ, shall not lose their reward, what an exceeding and eternal weight of glory attends those happy souls who constantly labour, and patiently suffer for him !

I am your obliged and faithful

Friend and Servant,





A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev^d. Mr. * * * *

Sunday Afternoon, Oct. 13, 1754.

My dear Friend,

Was this morning (though unseen by you) present at your sermon on the public worship of God, and sat impatiently, expecting and longing to hear that name mentioned, by which alone cometh Salvation. Surely, thought I, when all his *heathen* and *moral* motives are done, I shall at last hear him urge that *best* and *most* prevailing motive to our joining together in the praise of God, *viz.* the exceeding riches of his mercy to us in Christ Jesus. But alas! how were all my expectations frustrated? and how did my heart sink when the sermon was ended! — If there is any faith to be given, either to the words or behaviour

of

of man, you are a *Christian*. But what did you say here, more than *Socrates* might have said? You will pardon my boldness; God knows the sincerity of my heart, when I protest, that it is only from a motive of love to your soul, and the souls of those which hear you, that I write with such freedom. Give me leave then to ask, Have you, for your own soul in particular, found redemption through the blood of Christ? I have all the reason imaginable, from your sweet conversation, which discovers an heart overflowing with the love of God, to believe that you have. But how is it then that you could preach one such sermon as this? Oh search well into your own heart; is there not some root of bitterness remaining, some evil shame, which renders you thus inconsistent? Had I not heard you myself, I could not have thought it possible, for you to have preached in this manner, after the glorious things you have said to me. You have called me friend. Take this letter as the highest proof of friendship I could possibly give you; is it not so, for your sake to run the hazard of being thought *bold* and *assuming*? If you are offended, tell me so *plainly*, but at the same time freely forgive me; and believe me, with the sincerest wishes for your present usefulness and everlasting happiness,

Your ever obliged and affectionate Friend,



LETTERS

TO THE

Rev^d. Mr. * * * *.

Dear Sir,

OUR answer to my question, on
What is the proper foundation of our
rejoicing in temporal blessings, is per-
fectly satisfactory, and I thank you for
it. What you say of Mr. P's tract is just what
I wanted : possibly some fit season may be given
me to make a good use of it. One would imagine
that if singleness of eye, and sincerity of heart were
really found in all those of our ministers, who in a
measure preach the gospel, there would scarce be
room left even for the shadow of a dispute ; but
this is only imagination ; for I cannot help observ-
ing of some, for whose sincerity I would answer
with

with my life, that they are far from being consistent long together. I have lately been attacked with a mighty pretty distinction (and from my ignorance a new one to me) in respect of the doctrine of assurance of forgiveness of sin. — Mr. *** says it is of the *essence of faith*; but most of the old *Puritans*, together with a heap of great names (of which I remember not one) say it is of the *fruits of faith*. — A poor weak woman, who has not learnt logic, may be easily puzzled with the nicety of a logical distinction: but still I could plainly see, that let it be essence or fruits, there was a manifest necessity for enforcing the doctrine: because a tree which brings not forth its proper fruits, is a barren tree. — A faith which brings not forth its proper fruits, is a dead faith, and consequently unprofitable. — The answer is, “A tree may be “alive, and yet not bring forth fruit immediately.” — Well, but this makes nothing against the necessity there is that it *should* bring forth fruit, in order to make it a profitable tree. — But then we have a homily to fly to: — “The homily on salvation says nothing of assurance.” — If the homily contradicts St. Paul, the homily is nothing to me. — “O, you won’t refer it to that, “because it makes against you.” — I do not so much as know what is in it. — “It only says a *sure trust and confidence*.” — I think a *sure confidence* is nearly the same with assurance. — “No, they “are very different.” — Now, Sir, you must

be

be so good to furnish me with two or three of your strong arguments, to pull down this *Babel* tower, which *our friends* are building. I should also be glad, if you would tell me by what happy art you are always *consistent* in doctrine, as well as practice : for I can find no one else that is so. — Difference of opinion I regard not ; I could enjoy fellowship of spirit with a truly sincere *Predestinarian*, *Papist*, or *Quaker*. Inconsistency is the thing alone which hurts me. When I find this in people who I know to be in so much higher a state of grace than myself, and whom I love and honour, it disquiets me own, by far too much ; and my soul, like *Noah's* dove, flies solitary about, and finds no place of rest on the face of the whole earth ; till at last with one olive-leaf, and *only one*, she returns joyful to the ark. — Give me leave, Sir, to intreat of you (if you should have a little time to spare) that you will just point out to me, *First*, What are the probable causes of this inconsistency, in those who have *truly* sincerity of heart, and singleness of eye. *Secondly*, What is the most probable means of curing this distemper of the mind. And, *Thirdly*, How I may avoid falling into it myself, and keep my soul from being disquieted, when I find it in those whom I highly esteem. — I hope God continues to preserve to us your precious health, and that your long journeys may be a means of strengthening and establishing it.—I doubt not but the work of the Lord prospers in your hands, and that you

will

will have much reason to rejoice in the fruit of your labours. How happy are you to be always thus employed, in such eminent service for your master. You live almost the life of an unembodied spirit; and I live nearly the life of a *plant*. But thank God, it is absolutely certain, that this immortal spirit of mine, which is thus pressed in on every side, and weighed down with matter, will some time burst its bonds, and break the bars of its prison; and then, how it will soar! Nothing sure can equal the life, the joy, the *glorious liberty*, which a spirit must feel, when first delivered from its heavy clog! Farewell, may our dear Redeemer continually watch over you, and bless you in every thought, word, and action!

I am, &c.



Even to himself his heart to witness fair even
so much striking than self at that

September 17.

Dear Sir,

HOW shall I find words to thank you for your sweet expressions of care and friendship for my soul. Ten thousand thousand blessings on your own for this kindness.—I hope I may in one sense say, that my soul prospers, because I

desire

desire nothing but that the will of God may be done in me and by me. But I have not at present those sensible comforts and overflowings of joy I have at some times experienced : the cries of a sickly infant, which touch all the finest springs of human nature, cast a kind of heaviness over my soul ; and the perpetual and strict watch I am obliged to keep over my heart, for fear the least murmuring or complaining thought should arise in it (which I would rather die than suffer) seem rather to restrain my soul from the glorious freedom she once had, of losing herself in the heights and depths of divine love. — Oh blessed hours of abstraction from all creatures, and joyful communion with the fountain and center of all happiness, when will ye return ? When it is the will of my heavenly Father that you should return : and in that divine will I rest contented, willing, nay pleased, to suffer any thing, every thing, so I may be kept from sin. I have lately had inward temptations, buzzing about my mind, like insects in a summer's day ; but, by looking to Jesus, I as easily disperse them, as the waving hand disperses those little troublesome animals : and, thanks to my Redeemer's boundless mercy, I still enjoy in my inmost soul, a peace, which I would not lose for millions of worlds. But I greatly want constant recollection, and a mortified humble spirit. You know the weight your words have with me ; give me, I beg of you, some directions for obtaining this. I can-

not take my leave, without thanking you again and again, for enquiring after my soul: Oh how dearly do I love you for this goodness. May the tender mercies of God be with you! May the eternal Comforter meet and bless you in every word of your tongue, and in every thought of your heart!

Your ever-grateful and affectionate



February 28.

I Shall not forget the great reason I had to be thankful both to God and you, for our *last* conversation. It seemed to me, that I had more liberty of speaking to you than usual, though a thousand things were yet left unsaid; and you led me to make many observations, which I hope will be of *lasting* benefit to my soul. You have taught me to see the amazing wisdom and loving-kindness of God in several instances, which I should not else have thought of; and I am fully satisfied with all his disposals: knowing he orders all things well, I chearfully submit; and I trust that strength will be given me to walk on in the way set before me, “ though sorrowful, yet (in one sense) always re-“ joicing.”— Is it not a great blessing that the thorns

thorns are mixed with roses? This is infinitely more than I deserve. — How true is it, that the higher satisfaction we have in any thing, besides God, the greater pain must necessarily attend it? I have often been taught this lesson, in various degrees, each rising above the other; and yet I have not learnt wisdom. And who shall teach me *this* wisdom? Why you yourself can lay down most excellent rules, but it is God alone who can give me power to practice them. I plainly see the necessity of having every thought brought into subjection to Christ: it must be thus, if I would attain settled peace and constant recollection — In your extract from *Molinos*, the state of mind I am seeking is well described in these words: “The soul that is entered into the heaven of peace, acknowledges itself full of God, and his supernatural gifts; because it lives grounded in a *pure love*, receiving equal pleasure in light and darkness, in night and day, in *affliction* and *consolation*: through this holy and heavenly *indifferency*, it never loses its peace in *adversity*, nor its *tranquillity* in *tribulation*, but sees itself full of unspeakable enjoyments, &c.” — And again, “Though the valley of the lower faculties of the soul is suffering *tribulations*, *combats*, *martyrdoms*, and *sugestions*, yet at the *same time*, on the lofty mountain of the higher part of the soul, the true sun casts its beams; it enflames and enlightens it, and so it becomes clear, peaceable, resplendent,

"dent, quiet, serene, being a mere ocean of joy."— But alas ! you will say, " How far are you from this state !" — True, I am far from it indeed ; and yet I have sometimes experienced some little glimmerings of it, but they have been soon disturbed : and then I have fondly said to myself, Well, when this trial, when this temptation, or difficulty is over, I shall return to my sweet peace, and my soul will be wholly swallowed up in the love of God. Vain imagination ! I think I have now *experimentally* learnt a truth, which before only floated in my brain, " That the peace of a christian does not consist in being free from temptations and difficulties, but in stedfastly and calmly conquering them." — Once more, the Lord preserve you ! Could my prayers avail any thing, what blessings would you receive, in body, soul, and spirit ! Oh farewell, farewell ! And when your soul is most carried up to God, remember to pray for

Your grateful and affectionate

Dear.

April 2.

Dear Sir,

I return you many thanks for writing so soon, and particularly for filling *two* sides of your paper; my soul was as much enlivened by your letter, as the earth, the birds, and flowers, are by the rays of the sun, after a long and heavy rain. May your blessed master reward you for all your goodness to me!

I thank God I have in some measure learnt that grand lesson; “Not as I will, but as *thou* wilt;” and I continually pray that he may teach it me more and more: the present idle and half-dying life I am obliged to lead, greatly needs this temper of mind; and it is all the free mercy of my Redeemer that I can now say, his grace is sufficient for me.

In regard to temporal blessings, I have now and then a little dispute with some of my religious friends, and I want your authority to strengthen my arguments. — They say, Whatever temporal blessing God gives, you are to rejoice and take a pleasure in it, as his gift. And I say, Whatever temporal blessing God bestows, the motive for your rejoicing should be *merely* the *will* of God: for if you rejoice in the blessing considered as a happiness in itself (though referring it to God with a thankful heart) you are building on the sand, and your happiness

H 3 will

will be shaken, if not overturned, by the first storm that beats upoh it. But if the *will* of God be the motive of your rejoicing, you build your happiness on a foundation which never can be moved: the present blessing, indeed, may vanish away, but your cause of rejoicing still remaineth sure and stedfast, in time and in eternity.— Some people think the *way* I am in at present a prodigious happiness, and the greatest of worldly blessings, and will ask me, “Are you not *pleased*?”— I answer, I am pleased with every thing which is the will of God; and the answer is thought an odd one: but I cannot help it, I dare not make any other.

You want me to say something upon christian love ripened in eternity, but this is a theme for angels, my soul is too low, too dull to attempt to write upon it; I can only wish and pray to be a partaker of it. Farewel; may the sweetest streams of redeeming love ever fill your soul.

I am unalterably yours,

Dear

July 18.

Dear Sir,

I can truly say, that I would with joy devote all I have, and all I am to God, and gladly spend every hour in his service; but the difficulties I find in the way are indeed insuperable to me, though not so I think to every one, at least if I may judge from some few instances I have seen since my acquaintance with you.—You yourself, ~~even outwardly~~, appear to me to spend every hour to the glory of God; and for this reason I look upon you to be the happiest of mankind. When I see you spent with fatigue, your eyes half closed, and your outward man seeming to hasten to its dissolution, though I would freely give my own life and strength to increase yours, I almost envy you this glorious fatigue, and say to myself, How happy, how blessed is this man, thus to spend and be spent in the service of his Redeemer! Think me not presumptuous when I say, that I place you constantly before my mind, as my living example. Outwardly it certainly is impossible for me to follow you; but inwardly! — Oh, Sir, that I could in every faculty of my soul be a follower of you, even as you are of Christ!—You bid me love enough; and doubtless if I could love enough, I should (as you say) do enough, for perfect love is perfect liberty, liberty to conquer all sin, and attain to all holiness. This is the glorious

privilege of the children of God ; and this my soul pants after. But though I can sincerely say that I love God above all things, yet it is very evident that I do not love enough, because the fruits of this perfect love are not produced in my soul. Sometimes my enemies seem intirely conquered, and my mind is smooth and calm, as were the waters after Christ had said to them, *Peace, be still.* But when I seem thus strong, I am (to my inexpressible shame and confusion) found to be *weakness* itself : some trifle, which perhaps had appeared too contemptible even to be thought of, will be the means of my *inwardly* falling ; but thanks be to God I have this given me,

“ Quick as the apple of an eye.”
 “ The slightest touch of sin to feel.”
 To feel, and immediately to fly to that blood of sprinkling which alone can cleanse me from this pollution. But indeed, Sir, I find every day more and more the truth of your words, “ that I have need to *watch always.*” I am set as it were in the midst of snares, both friends and enemies conspiring together to keep me from that humility which is so necessary to one who wishes to be *really a christian.* My enemies lead to pride, by railing at me for what is, and ought to be, in one *sense*, my glory ; and my friends, by having too high an opinion of me ; I think there is none, except yourself, who do

do not in some measure hurt me: and therefore, though I dare not call you my friend, as implying any particular attachment on your part, you are in fact, my truest and best friend. Praise I now dread as poison; and yet my temper is such as makes some encouragement necessary. Your behaviour to me is exactly fitted to preserve the balance of my mind even: a smile of approbation from you, is *that praise which encourages without endangering.* You will pardon my speaking so much of myself: a patient, you know, must fully lay open his case to his physician; and I have been emboldened even by you yourself, to increase the length of my letters. Oh may your blessed master reward you for all your labours in his service, and for all your goodness to

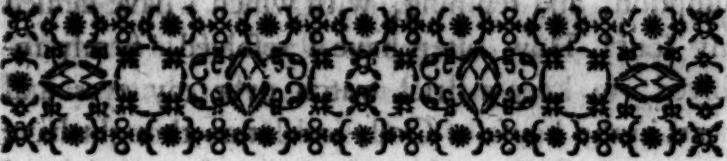
Your unworthy, though

ever-grateful and affectionate

* *



[L 1574 H]



MEDITATIONS UPON SOME Texts of Scripture.

My God, how fatally do I experience the truth of this assertion! My heart is indeed deceitful above all things; and how great is my confusion and sorrow on the melancholy reflection. Lord I have, by the deceitfulness and wickedness of my own heart, justly forfeited my title to the joys of eternity, incurred thy indignation, and made myself obnoxious to that dreadful sentence, *Depart ye cursed!* And how just this sentence, after the crimes my deceitful heart has betrayed me into; after the many good resolutions I have broke; after the sins of ingratitude, presumption,

sumption, and repining, with which I have defiled my soul ! How often have I resolved, firmly resolved, to keep a strict watch over my eyes and heart in the house of God, and let no thought have entrance which could disturb my devotions, and prevent my addressing my Creator with the reverence I ought ; but, merciful God ! how contrary have I acted to all this ! Have not my eyes been amused by vanity, and my heart so distracted by idle and ridiculous ideas, that I have not known the words my lips pronounced ; nay, have not even unclean and blasphemous thoughts attacked me at this sacred time, and, wretch that I am ! been indulged, or but coldly rejected ? Oh sure and horrible proof that my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ! Lord I hate and abhor myself, for having thus often, and thus heinously offended thee ! I am utterly ashamed and confounded at my daring, my monstrous impiety ! How shall I dare to hope for pardon of a sin so frequently repeated, and with such aggravations ? When I consider the greatness of my guilt, my astonished soul is ready to sink in black despair. Blessed God ! I sin against the clearest conviction, against the checks of my conscience, and the kind admonitions of thy Holy Spirit ; and, strange perverseness ! against all the hopes and ideas I have of happiness, sin against that God, whom I love and adore from my soul, and whose favour I would this moment lay down my life to procure. The thoughts

of

of immortality, and the surprizing goodness of the Almighty in the works of creation and redemption, fill my mind with gratitude and wonder: I am lost in admiration, and could dwell for ever on the delightful theme; and yet, inconsistent wretch that I am! I go on to offend this divine author of my being, by my careless, supine, and irreverent addresses, and my wicked and fantastic thoughts. My prayers are turned into sin: and now is it not presumption, the highest presumption, to hope for pardon? Or rather, would it not be a greater sin than I have yet committed, to despair of it? Is not mercy the darling attribute of God? It is; and I embrace and adore that mercy: that mercy which is so freely offered to the worst of sinners: that mercy which is made sure to us by the blood of a crucified Saviour. Oh my only refuge! my dearest hope and everlasting confidence! teach me words to express the sentiments I have of thee, and the abhorrence I have of my guilt. I detest myself, hate my vile ingratitude, and am fully convinced of my own weakness, and the vanity of my best resolutions, without thy assisting grace: Oh grant me that, for the sake of my Redeemer; on that alone will I rely; never more will I trust to the strength of my own reason; I have found by dear experience, that I am folly and inconstancy itself; without thy aid I am worse than nothing, but with the blessing I wish and implore, I shall be more than conqueror. But is the sin I have now been lamenting

lamenting the only instance of the wickedness and
 deceitfulness of my heart ? Alas ! it is not : I have
 innumerable proofs of its treachery, every day and
 every hour brings some, and gives me new cause
 for grief and repentance. I resolve frequently, no
 more to murmur and repine at the misfortunes I
 lie under ; no more to look back with discontent,
 or forwards with distrust : and these resolutions I
 strengthen, by reflections on the wisdom of God :
 how much better he knows to chuse for me, than
 I could for myself ; and how unavailing impatience
 is under ills I cannot prevent. Then I consider
 how small my punishment is, in comparison of
 what I deserve, and should suffer, was not the Al-
 mighty infinitely merciful ; and what blessings af-
 flictions are productive of, when received with hu-
 mility and resignation : and yet after all this, how
 often do I catch my deceitful heart breathing an
 impious sigh, and by this secret complaint accusing
 providence ! How often are my eyes lift up, with a
 " Lord ! why am I thus miserable ? Why, while
 " I see all around me gay and prosperous, must I
 " alone be unfortunate, and mourn without find-
 " ing one to pity me ? What have I done to de-
 " serve the being disappointed in every thing I
 " have set my affections on, and deceived by every
 " friend I have trusted ?" — With this surprizing
 boldness have I dared to expostulate with my Makers,
 and yet his mercy still allows me life and time for
 repentance. Oh thou adorable Being ! may I never

more

more offend thee by a discontented word or thought : but grant that every faculty of my soul may be in perfect resignation to thy will ; and by this resignation acquire that tranquillity and peace, which all the delights and prosperities of the earth are not able to give.

Again. I resolve every day to be perfectly easy under every little mortification I may meet in the common occurrences of life. How weak (I cry) is it to be affected by the folly or ill-nature of the world ! Why should I regard the sneers of people, whose low sentiments are only deserving scorn and pity ? Can the unreasonable and unjust notions of another rob me of any real merit ? Can an envious, a malicious, or a detracting speech, do me any material injury, unless I give it force myself, by my impatience and want of temper ? No certainly : nothing from without can hurt me, but by my own fault. A mind fortified with religion and philosophy is proof against the darts of either senseless tattle, or ill-natured wit ; firm and collected within itself, it smiles superior, and looks down on the ignorant and the malicious with pity and contempt.—These reflections are just ; and Oh that I could reduce them into practice ! But here I miserably fail. After my soul has plumed herself with these fine notions, and is ready to pronounce herself equal to every trial, she sinks in the most shameful manner. A word, a look, nay the very appearance of

a slight, throws me into the greatest uneasiness and confusion; and though I can govern my temper enough to hide it from the world, my heart is ready to burst with indignation, and the peace of my mind is broke for hours, perhaps days. Strange weakness! — But why do I call it strange? Am I not too well acquainted with the fatal cause of this, and almost every sin I am guilty of? 'Tis vanity, that intolerable vanity which mixes itself with all I act, or speak, or think; nay, which is the very motive of all my thoughts, words, and actions. When I look strictly into my deceitful and wicked heart, I find it so full of this abominable vice, that I regard myself with horror and amazement, and yet perhaps the next moment indulge in airy schemes and self-complacency. Sure there is not in the whole universe so vain and sinful a wretch as I am! What can I hope for? What can I expect? Will not eternal rejection from the presence of God be justly my portion? Oh thought of unutterable horror! My God! my only hope! can I think of being for ever cast out from the light of thy countenance, and live? Why does not the dreadful idea at once put an end to my being? All the torments of damnation are summed up in these shocking words. — Eternal rejection from thy presence! — Oh gracious and adorable Being! let me not be thus beyond imagination cursed. In the name of my blessed Saviour I implore thy pity! Oh look with compassion on a soul which pants for

for grace and forgiveness ! a soul sensible of her weak and polluted state, and intirely relying on thy mercy. Oh speak peace to this troubled sea, and all shall be calm ! Give me strength to resist those temptations I so often sink under ! But above all, change this wicked and deceitful heart of mine, and give me a new heart and a new spirit. Mortify in me all proud thoughts and vain opinions of myself, and let not the blessings thou hast bestowed upon me increase my condemnation, by being made motives for pride and vain glory. Hear and grant my requests, Oh ever-merciful God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

1748.

*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden,
and I will refresh you.*

THESE, Oh compassionate Saviour, were thy words ; this thy gracious call, and I obey it. I come unto thee, Oh thou light of the world ! for rest, peace and everlasting refreshment ; wearied with treading the paths of folly and vanity ; wearied with deceitful hopes and idle fears, and all the gay delusions of this sublunary world, I come unto thee for peace, and come with full assurance of obtaining it. Assurance founded on thy promises ; those promises

promises which are truth itself: merciful as thy own beneficent nature, and unalterable as thy being. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but thy word shall never fail. Encouraged by this word, I come: not even the reflection of my absolute unworthiness shall keep me from thee. 'Tis to sinners that this heavenly call is addressed: sinners that labour under the heavy burden of their offences, and such am I. The miserable wretch who is chained to the oar, is not more weary of his slavery, than I am of my sins: the sins which so easily beset me, and so often conquer my best resolutions. Every hour I have new reason to lament my weakness, and to confess that thy grace is my only refuge. O let that grace, which has kept me from all infamous crimes, be also my preservative against those sins of the mind, which, though hid from the short-sighted world, are all open to thee, and render my soul equally odious to the eye of heaven. Oh save me from myself! from my own proud thoughts and vain affections! — I come to thee, blessed Jesus, that I may have rest: Oh give me that rest! then shall all be perfect peace and harmony, and my soul shall feel no emotions but those of joy and gratitude, eternal gratitude for my gracious and almighty benefactor.

This

This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

O H glorious and ever transporting thought ! Sure and never failing remedy for all the troubles and disappointments of life ! — Incorruption and immortality ! — Let me dwell on the charming words : they carry peace and everlasting joy in the sound ; and yet how little can my soul understand of their real meaning and full import, clogged by this weight of flesh and blood, darkened by this cloud of sin and error, what true idea can she form of incorruption ? But if the faint shadow and distant prospect affords such inexpressible delight, what will the full enjoyment give ? Imagination is lost in the dazzling reflection ! All the scenes of this lower world vanish as a mist before the sun, and my elevated soul wholly absorpt in contemplation of those mighty blessings seems to soar above the stars, and launch at once into the sea of eternity. My God ! My everlasting hope ! Great and adorable Creator of all things ! Where shall I find words expressive of my wonder, my joy and gratitude ? Thy mercy, thy free and boundless mercy, from nothing called me into being, and made that being capable of an endless duration. Formed me for eternity ! And what raises the benefit infinitely higher, for an eternity of happiness. Not the united power of men and devils can deprive me of this

this without my own consent : and if I am miserable I have no one to blame, except myself. If, Oh my God, thy justice displays itself in my punishment, I will adore that justice, and (Oh forgive the boldness of the expression !) was that adorable justice to plunge me into the torments of hell, I should still love thee ; I could not help it. And would it be possible for me to be miserable (even in this place of horror) while that principle ruled in my soul ? Again, O merciful God ! I implore forgiveness for this bold enquiry : but I adore thee past all expression, and the notions I have of thy divine attributes inspire me with an unbounded confidence. Unworthy as I am of the least of all thy mercies, I cannot but hope for the greatest ; and in the midst of my continual offences, I look up to thee, as my friend, my only refuge and constant benefactor. When I grieve for my sins, 'tis not from fear of punishment, but from the cutting reflection of my black ingratitude, in offending my Creator and Preserver, the God in whom I live, and move, and have my being ; the God to whom I owe infinitely more than I can conceive ; to whom I owe the glorious and the assured hopes of incorruption and immortality. And here again, O my soul, take wing, again lose thyself in the blissful prospect ! Think on the joy thou wilt feel when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption ; when this companion (which spite of the miseries it betrays thee into, is still dear and still

end)

too

too tenderly beloved) shall become (instead of a clog, or a prison) a vehicle pure and ethereal, perfectly fitted for all the purposes of thy enlarged faculties, and the completion of thy glory and happiness. O blessed and desirable re-union ! State of permanent delight, and never fading joy ! With what rapture does thy idea inspire my soul ! Fired by thoughts like these, I rise far above the most glorious prospects, earth, with all her boasted varieties, can give. Pleasures, riches, honours, what are ye all ? Emptiness and nothing — at the least glimpse of eternal day, how ye vanish into soft air ! Lost are all your shining toys ; your painted glories intirely lost ! And Oh may their deluding shadows never return to darken my soul ! May the God in whom I trust, preserve me from all their temptations ; may his mercy ever protect and guide me, and bring me in the end to that state of incorruption and immortality, which I hope for through the merits and mediation of our ever blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Then

Then Peter said, Now know I that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.

THIS text is so strong a proof of the unreasonableness and folly of national or religious prejudices, that one would imagine it should intirely banish those odious and pernicious principles from the whole christian world: but daily experience too plainly discovers the contrary; and the very people who would be thought to have the greatest zeal for the glory of God, and the good of souls, are of all others the readiest to condemn those who dissent from them. 'Tis a common (though a false assertion) of the libertine part of mankind, that priests of all religions are the same; but they might truly affirm, that bigots of all religions are the same, equally destructive of the peace of their fellow-creatures, and the laws of civil society. What wild havock, what horrid scenes of blood and slaughter, have been produced by mistaken zeal and blind prejudice? The histories of former times abound with shocking instances of this kind; and, strange inconsistency! The persecuted party have no sooner got the upper hand, but they have, with the power, assumed the spirit of their persecutors, and been guilty of the very acts of injustice they had so loudly exclaimed against. 'Tis true, the degrees and kinds of persecution differ, according to the particular

particular notions of the sects, or the particular laws of the states where it is practised ; but persecution, in whatever shape or degree, is still persecution, and proceeds from that spirit of prejudice and bigotry which makes us look on God as a respecter of persons, and on all those who differ from us as his enemies, and consequently, deserving nothing at our hands but contempt and cruelty. Thus the furious *Roman Catholic* brands with the name of heretic, all who are without the pale of his church, pursues them with fire and sword in this world, and sentences them to eternal punishment in the next ; and the stanch sour *Protestant* devoutly expatiates on the crying sin of idolatry, never thinks of the pope without joining with him antichrist and the devil, absolutely pronounces the church of *Rome* to be the whore of *Babylon*, and expects (with great christian charity) that in a few ages more she and all her members will be swallowed up in the bottomless pit, the lake of fire and brimstone : nay, the bigots of (even) the little trifling sects into which the reformed religion is subdivided, all agree mutually to damn each other, and wholly to appropriate to those of their own denomination, the title of God's church, and God's chosen. — Surprizing narrowness of soul ! Worse than *Jewish* stupidity ! They had some excuse for their arrogance : the particular manner in which providence had distinguished them from the rest of the world, seemed to be some foundation for their pride to build on ; and
 'tis

'tis not to be wondered that the dark shadow of the law should almost totally obscure the principles of charity and universal benevolence: but that people under the glorious dispensation of the gospel, men who pretend to be followers of that Jesus whose whole life was a scene of moderation and charity, who laid down his life for his enemies, and prayed for his murderers: in a word, that christians should despise, hate, and persecute their fellow-christians, is a consideration equally melancholly and amazing. Mistaken men! Is then the great Creator of the universe, the preserver of all his creatures, the God of mercy, who would not that any one should perish, is this adorable being a respecter of persons? Is his justice to be biased by your foolish distinctions? Or his mercy lessened by your uncharitable judgments? In vain you would make the Almighty a party in your quarrel, and pretend to be fighting his cause! He disclaims such furious champions; nor will true religion allow of defenders, who are destroying the most glorious part of her system, that principle of universal charity, which in the apostolical times was the distinguishing mark of christianity. It was then said, See how these christians love one another! But now (sad contrast!) see how these christians hate one another! Oh blessed and ever-merciful God! look down with compassion on the deplorable state of the christian world! See how thy church is laid waste and rent asunder, by the fraud, malice, or blind zeal of particular men: in

one place over-run by superstition, in another undetermined by sceptism ; and every where robbed of her primitive peace and purity. Oh restore that purity ! Restore that peace ! Heal her breaches, reform her superstitions, and grant that we may, with one heart and one mind, with universal love and unbounded charity to our fellow-creatures, and a firm and lively faith in our blessed Redeemer, adore thee the only true God ; and, after a life of piety and virtue in this world, attain one of unalterable glory and happiness in the next. Amen.



O God thou art my God ! early will I seek thee.

WHEN we are deprived of all the joys of life, betrayed by those we trusted, forsaken by our friends, triumphed over by our enemies, and robbed of our dearest hopes, where and to whom must we go for relief ? What comfort can be hoped in a condition so desperate ? — Will reflection on the past give us ease ? — Alas ! it makes our wounds still deeper ; and every remembrance of the treachery of our friends, or the malice of our enemies, draws a new sigh from the opprest and aching heart, and a fresh tear from the sinking eye. — Shall we look forwards ? — All dark and gloomy is the prospect, and the mind, wearied

with affliction, and wholly deprest by grief and disappointments, shudders at the thought of launching again into the sea of delusions, of again trusting, and being again deceived. In circumstances so deplorable, nothing can calm our grief, nothing afford us one moment's peace, but seeking early after God; and happy! thrice happy! that soul, which can say with the royal *Psalmist*, *O God! thou art my God, my refuge in all my distresses, my only hope, and everlasting peace!* — A man who can look up to the great author of nature with a confidence like this, who can seek after God with full assurance of finding him, and in him a sure relief for all the troubles and miseries of life, is superior to all events, and may be happy in the most terrible afflictions. Is he deprived of his estate, and reduced to a despised and unrelieved poverty, he is still rich in the pleasing hopes that his God will one day bestow on him a glorious and never-failing inheritance. Is he by death robbed of his dearest friends? His grief is immediately calmed, by the thoughts of that eternal state to which he is every moment approaching, and where he will meet those dear objects of his tenderness, never, never to be parted from them more. Is his reputation made a sacrifice to spite and calumny, and himself condemned, reviled, and hated by all his acquaintance? Still true to his principles, and firm in his trust on the Almighty, he braves the storm, and with joy looks forward to that day, when his accusers

cusers shall be covered with shame and confusion, and his innocence be openly declared in the sight of men and angels. Is he betrayed by those he trusted with an unbounded confidence, by those who were dear to him as himself, and for whose life he would freely have paid his own? Even in this affliction (which is of all others the most grating to human nature) he is still master of himself, and possessing his soul in patience and resignation, looks up to that friend who will never deceive him, to that God who is truth itself. Convinced of the folly of placing his love and trust on creatures, he for the future fixes it wholly on the eternal Creator, and acknowledges with sincerity the mercy of God, in thus graciously releasing his heart from those deluding ties, which had so often drawn him from the center of the true happiness and end of his being. Thus blessed is he, who can say with faith, gratitude, and humility, *O God, thou art my God!* — Grant, Oh most adorable and omnipotent Being! grant me this glorious privilege! I have nothing more to ask. That thou art my God, is a blessing infinitely greater than the whole creation can bestow; infinitely beyond all I can ask or conceive. Possessed of this, I can defy the combined malice of men and devils. Welcome distress, poverty, disappointment, and affliction of all kinds, even what I have most dreaded! Welcome all, if it is the will of heaven! What hurt are ye capable of doing me, while I can say to the rock of

ages, “Thou art my God?” And certainly, Oh thou fountain of life and author of all good, ’tis thy gracious will that I should thus address thee; else why this firm reliance on thee in all my afflictions? Why this intire confidence in thy mercy and goodness, in the midst of my sufferings? How often, when my heart has been sinking under a load of sorrow, have I found relief and comfort, by applying to thee? In troubles which I have thought impossible to be endured, thou hast been my support; and when at any time I have been tempted to discontent, and dared to murmur and complain, how quickly has thy grace inspired me with remorse for my impiety, and enabled me to make a new act of resignation to thy providence! Sure and infallible proofs that thou art my God! And Oh may I never repay those instances of thy compassion and tender mercy with ingratitude! Never more distrust the power which has so often delivered me! But grant, Almighty Father, that in all the trials thou hast allotted me in this mortal state, I may seek thee early, and in seeking thee find all the blessings thou hast promised, peace and perfect tranquillity in this life, and everlasting joy and happiness in the next! These favours, these blessings I implore in the name, and for the sake of my merciful Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

*But the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly
evil, full of deadly poison.*

NEVER sure, were those words of the apostle more fully verified than in the present age ! A person must be intirely a stranger to the world, who is not sensible of this, and convinced by dear-bought experience, what an unruly evil the tongue is ; how full of deadly poison ! 'Tis indeed a monster which no art can tame, and as indefatigable as cruel : unwearied in doing mischief, it shoots its venom on every side ; the most innocent life is not exempt from its wounds, and a conspicuous and uncommon merit is attacked by it with redoubled fury. The horrible mischiefs which have been occasioned by a wicked and slandering tongue are not to be numbered, and yet they are continually increasing : whole hecatombs of reputations are daily sacrificed by an ill-natured story, seasoned with a little false wit ; nay, by a single word, a distant hint, or invidious sneer ! Scandal and detraction have an absolute and unbounded sway in all ranks and conditions of men ; even people who pretend to religion, and an uncommon share of piety, are not free from this vice : 'tis true they would not for the world tell a lie, or be the inventors of a malicious story ; but then they will not scruple canvassing in the strictest manner, the most trivial actions of their neighbours, and passing judgment according to the particular notions they have

of things. Good people certainly will not talk scandal ; but sure a little harmless detraction may be indulged : besides it shews their zeal for religion, and the abhorrence they have for any thing that looks like sin ; and then it is so natural to find fault, and gives the censors such an air of superiority, and at the same time affords an opportunity for displaying their great humility and modesty, in the salvoes they never fail to make use.—To be sure one ought not to judge, but I really think that must be with a bad design.—Certainly one should think the best, but 'tis very plain when people live in that manner, they can have no sense of any thing that is good ; and where they think to go when they die, is surprizing to me.—I am very sorry to say it, and would have you very cautious how you mention it again, but sure no creature ever acted in so shocking and ridiculous a manner as he did in that affair. — I don't know, its hard judging, and God only knows the heart ; but for my part, I would not have so much to answer for, for all the world. — Thus people who are (perhaps) in all other parts of their conduct unblameable, fail in this material one, and are guilty of the very fault they would seem to shun.

Why

Why art thou so heavy, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God!

O Gracious and most adorable God! forgive my want of confidence in thee! Pardon and remove this cloud of fear and discontent, which now sits so heavy on my soul! Lord I own it would be infinitely just to overwhelm me with the ills I fear, and so rashly anticipate; and could I suffer alone, not one murmuring thought should follow thy severest dispensations: but O my God! should I be wounded through what is so much dearer than myself, how inexpressibly wretched will be my condition, and how shall I be able to make an act of resignation like this! And yet I will — I must — my happiness to eternal ages depends on it. Ever-blessed God! Glorious Creator of innumerable worlds! shall a worm dare to dispute with thee? No: if I am to lose — (O dreadful thought!) but if what I fear is to come to pass, thy will be done.

Thanks, praise, and ever-grateful adorations, more than I can utter, more than I can conceive, be to that merciful being, who has prevented the ills I feared, and restored me the only joy and comfort of my life, the only blessing which can make a longer continuance in this mortal state desirable.

And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.

To A R S A C E S.

YOU will think, Sir, by the words of scripture I have quoted, that I am going to write a sermon, and have taken them for my text. But I can assure you I have no such design, nor should I dare to attempt so sublime a subject; all I intend is, to recommend them to your consideration: for I am persuaded you could not reflect seriously on this noble expression, without having a much higher opinion of its author, than you had the last time I heard you talk on this subject. Tell me sincerely, did you ever, even in the classic writers, find an idea so inexpressibly grand, conveyed in so few words, and with such a beautiful simplicity? God said, *Let there be light, and there was light.* — Dwell upon the words. Can there be any thing stronger or more expressive? Oh had I your learning and eloquence, what a field would here be to display them in! But intirely void of either, I must desist,

And am, Sir, your, &c.

1749:

There

There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may bide themselves. Job, Chap. xxxiv. Ver. 22.

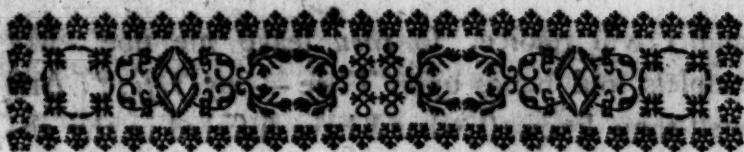
SERIOUS reflections on these words would surely stop the most daring sinner in his career of impiety. The man must be hardened indeed in the ways of sin, who is not shocked at this thought, that all his unjust, vile, and abominable actions will be one day laid open to the whole world; and himself (though wishing the mountains to fall on him, and the hills to cover him) exposed to the view of men and angels, and to the scorn and tauntings of those accursed spirits whose suggestions he has followed, to the ruin of his immortal soul. But all this is nothing — light as air, when laid in the balance with that most dreadful consequence of working iniquity, the anger of an offended God. — This is the fulness of misery? Where can a guilty creature hide itself from the all-seeing eye of the Almighty? And what horror must seize that unhappy spirit, who feels itself thrown from the center of bliss and glory, and doomed to the torments of unavailing repentance and black despair, by that most terrible sentence, *Depart ye cursed.* Oh would vain thoughtless man turn his eyes from the objects of sense, and the allurements of this present world, and consider what must be the certain end of indulging his passions and vicious appetites, it would be impossible for him to run —

AL AS! how unfit is my soul for contemplation! How sunk in vanity and folly! How lost to all those glorious hopes which once possessed her! Indolent, insensible! Blessed God! what a strange state of mind I am now in! At what a dreadful distance from thee! Is it the infirmity of my body that now clouds and overshadows my mind? Or is it not rather the sickness of the mind itself, that renders me incapable of addressing thee as I ought, and buries me in idle cares, vain distractions, and imaginations utterly unworthy a rational creature? I see too plainly where the fault lies: was this hour spent in company or trifling diversions, I should not find this heaviness upon my spirits, nor these impertinent distractions in my mind, I should then attend to what I was about; my vanity indeed would still accompany me, but then it would be a sprightly vanity, which would keep my soul awake. But now, because I have set this time apart to think upon God, I am either overwhelmed with ridiculous imaginations, or overcome with such a strange stupidity, that I seem sinking into utter loss of being.

1752.

part of this vol. EXTRACT

12 A.J.A.



[act]

EXTRACT FROM A LITTLE DIARY.

WEDNESDAY, the latter end of October, 1753, it was given me to say,
יהוה אלה. *

Saturday, September 7, 1754. After spiritual desertions, and wandering some days in the wilderness, the love of God returned to my soul, and I again rejoiced in Christ as *my* Saviour. Glory be to God, for his free and boundless mercy to the vilest of sinners, to the most unworthy and ungrateful of all human beings! And Oh Lord, life, and light of my soul, leave me not again, I humbly beseech thee! Let every outward comfort be withdrawn, and every outward torment be inflicted,

and

* That is, Jehovah is *my* Lord, and *my* God.

and I will rejoice, so *thou* leave me not. My helpless soul hangs upon Thee — *my Jesus!* And well thou knowest what I have suffered in thy absence: how my parched soul has fainted for thy refreshing streams; how it has stretched itself out after thee, and even agonised to find thee; and then miserably sunk, and been o'erwhelmed under the mountain of sin. But now *thou art* returned! The sun of righteousness has rose with healing in his wings, and the mountains have flowed down at thy presence. Where are my sins? Washed away in the blood of the Lamb! — Where is my unbelief? Suddenly vanished; I have no doubt now, *Jesus is mine*, and God the Father is now *my reconciled Father* through him; and God the Holy Ghost is *my comforter* and guide. Oh unspeakable transport, unbounded happiness! Let this paper bear witness for me to the free mercies of my God!

* *

January 5, 1754-5. Glory to the God of boundless mercy, who has this day, when sinking under great heaviness both of soul and body, lifted up the light of his countenance upon me, and made me drink deep of his redeeming love.— Oh sweetest and most compassionate Jesus! how do thy tender mercies follow and support my soul; and still I am ungrateful, and still I am not as

thou

thou wouldst have me to be ! Oh when wilt thou make a full end of sin, and bring in thy perfect righteousness ? All things are possible to thee ; and do I not know, do I not *taste* that thou art gracious ! Oh my sun, my shield, life of my life, look into my heart ; I dare appeal to thine all-searching eye, that there is nothing so dear to it, but I would this moment part with it for thee ! And why then, dearest Lord, wilt thou not form thy whole blessed image in my soul ? My unworthiness I know is greater than that of any other creature in the universe ; but this unworthiness will the more magnify thy mercy. I have only my unworthiness to plead ; and I have no hope but in thine atoning blood : Oh let this blood, which has bought my peace, cleanse me also from every sin ; and let that blessed Spirit, who has sealed and witnessed this *peace* to my soul, be now a spirit of burning, to consume all my dross, and to purify me even as — Oh glorious prospect, heart-enlivening hopes, let me sink into the dust before thee ! God of glory, God of purity, I am lost in self-abasement ! But hast thou not promised ? And wilt thou not fulfil thine own gracious word ? Oh give me then perfect sanctification of body, soul, and spirit ; and let this heavy cross which seems now coming upon me, be, by thine all-powerful grace, turned into a means of forwarding thy blessed work in my soul. Let every bitter cup which thou permittest to be given

given me, be joyfully received, as serving in some degree to conform me to thy sufferings; and let me in all things, though ever so contrary to my corrupt nature, give thanks, and say continually, Lord not my will, but thine be done. Amen.



F I N I S.

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